FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

VOLUME 13, NO. 5

PLAY·METER

MAY 1987

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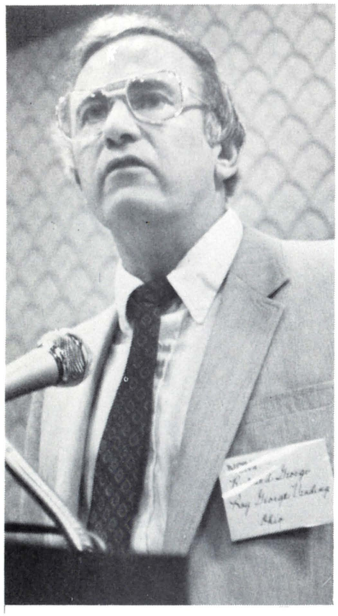

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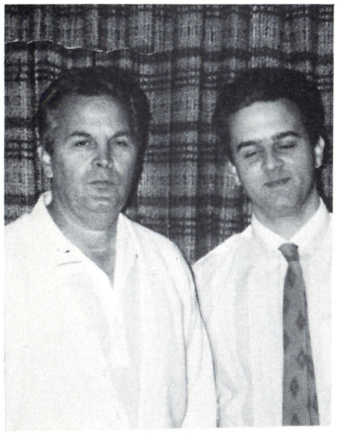

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PLAY METER

MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COIN-OPERATED ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

VOL. 13, NO. 5 CONTENTS MAY, 1987

FEATURES

The CD Box: A revolution, but for how long? **14**

The coin-op amusement industry is just entering the compact disc revolution with the CD jukeboxes. Seeburg decided on a dedicated CD-only box and Rowe opted for a combination unit, capable of playing CDs and 45s in one unit. Is one better than the other? Read about this latest technology and the industry's reaction to it. Following this story is a feature on Claudia Welker and what she is doing to help operators with music selection.

Coinman Interview: Gene and Tony Urso **27**

Gene and his son Tony have the honor of being our first father/son coinman interview. Their honest opinions give us a good idea of how operators are facing the decisions about CDs and how the jukebox portion of the business is doing. They don't always agree, but that only makes it more interesting. It seems only natural that two generations should have varying views.

Cranes still going strong **36**

The ACME show, as expected, was a showcase for crane manufacturers and plush suppliers. Though we expected the number of manufacturers to drop after an initial surge, that hasn't happened yet as evidenced by the number of companies still offering the redemption equipment. Here is a wrap-up of equipment shown at ACME.

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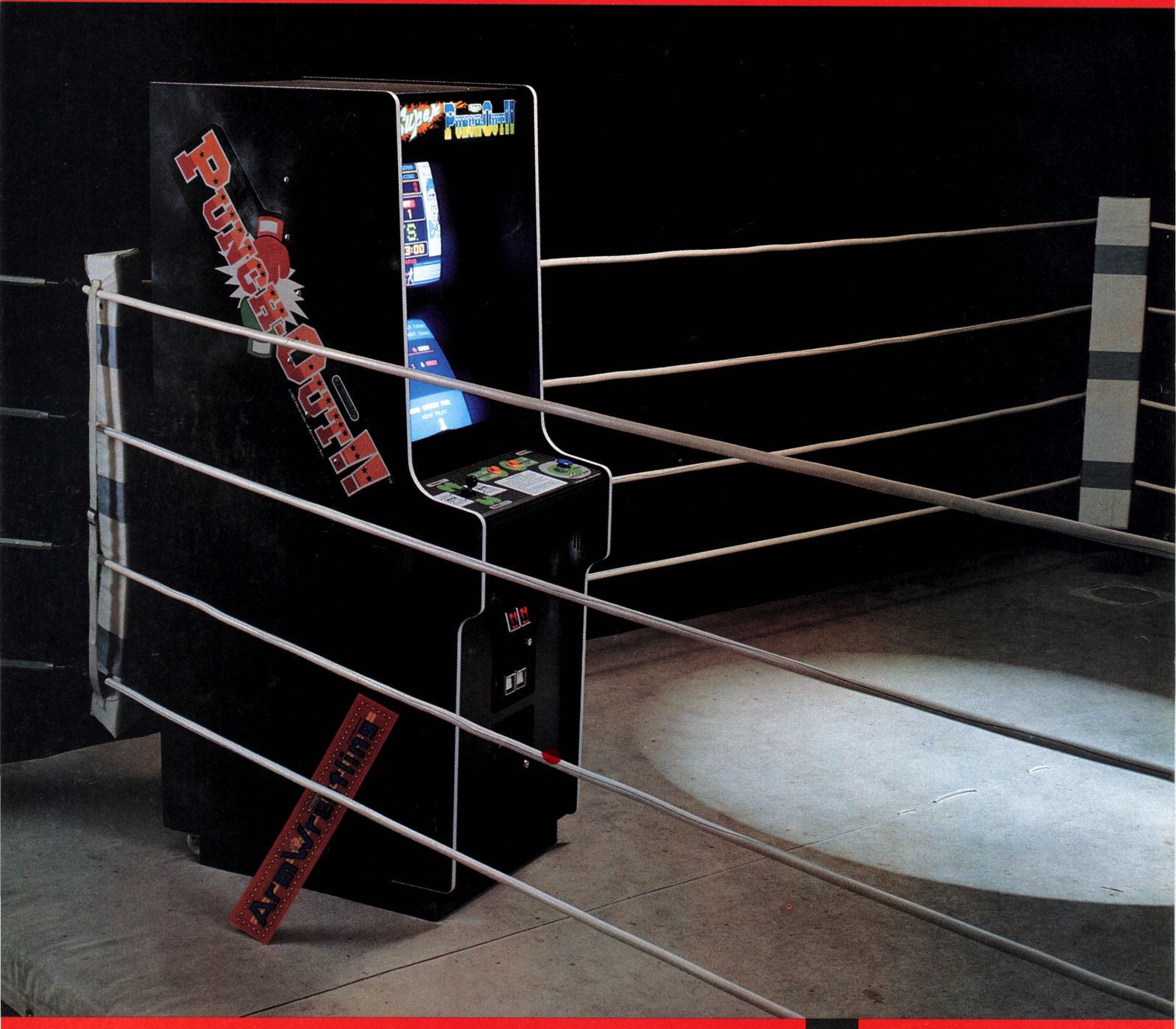
Shown on the cover with NSM Galaxy 200, that sounds as good as it looks, are NSM's Ule Schulze and Michael Senglemann. (See cover story on page 12.)

TURN AN OLD CHAMP



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LETTERS

NEEDS HELP

Recently I attended the ACME '87 at the Rivergate in New Orleans. Naturally, I collected a lot of literature and then lost it all. I am looking for sources for the coin-operated mechanism as well as manufacturers of machines.

Please send any information you may have or please advise who to contact.

Samuel T. Stewart
Treasure Pak, Inc.
St. Petersburg, FL

[Editor's note: We all know what it is like to lose brochures picked up at a show. Please add Mr. Stewart to your mailing lists for information he may need.]

HAPPY 50TH, PAUL

Just a note to let you know that on April 1, 1987, a dear friend of mine and of many in the industry, Paul Calamari, completed his 50th year in the industry.

Bernie Powers
Arachnid
Rockford, IL

[Editor's note: Paul, known as Mr. Pinball, is also a dear friend of mine and I join you in congratulating him for 50 years in the coin-op industry. I have been trying, without much success, to get Paul to sit down for a Coinman Interview. I haven't given up, though.]

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FROM THE EDITOR

Readers want the truth

An operator came up to me recently and during our conversation said something that startled me: "You guys with the trade magazines always ignore the bad things and only print the good stuff. We need to know everything!" I couldn't quite figure out if it was a question or a statement, but obviously he was waiting for me to make a reply.

"Do people really believe we do that?," I silently questioned myself. I had to think about it because it was a vaguely familiar statement but I'd always heard it in reverse about newspaper and TV news--that they ignore the good deeds in favor of sensationalism, which is usually the seamier side of life. The letters to the editor section of our local paper consistently features admonishments from someone outraged at pictures focusing on human misery or violence that seem to adorn the headlines.

So, here was someone that seemed to think that we were systematically censoring the news resulting in an unrealistic, rose-colored-glasses view of the state of the industry.

The more I thought about it, the more I was certain that we most certainly are NOT doing that. In fact, earlier I had been accused by a manufacturer of printing a story that "could have been ignored." So, in the same week I had been accused of focusing too much on the rosy side of the industry AND also accused of printing an unpleasant, though factual, story that I should have skipped.

It would seem that the press can't win. It's a classic case of, "you can't please everyone all the time." And, actually, our intentions are not foremost to try and please; our intentions and goals are to report, fairly and unbiased, industry news. We are not judge and jury. We have an obligation to report the news without sensationalism and without biased views. It's difficult to write a story that may be unfavorable to someone I personally admire and respect; and even more difficult to report favorably on someone I don't. But that's the job.

When a manufacturer calls and wants his game on the equipment poll, or asks to have a negative story pulled, I wonder how credible he feels our magazine is if he really believes we would do that.

But it's a Catch 22 situation. The majority of our readers are operators and our focus is towards helping them build stronger businesses. They know they can count on Play Meter to find out the true story so, in turn, our circulation grows. Advertisers place ads to reach those operators who are buying equipment. But then, since they are advertising, in effect supporting the magazine, some try to dictate what goes in the magazine. If we allowed that to happen, soon operators would see through the pretense and circulation would drop. Even the good is taken more seriously when readers trust the magazine.

I'm very proud to say that our circulation is sizable and I hope to think it's because we print the true state of the industry and reputable news--not simply what is dictated to us. I'm sad when we lose an advertiser because of an article in the magazine; but then it doesn't say much for that company, does it? Operators will have other choices of equipment and I hope they will support those that support them.

Whoever believes that circulation is not important probably doesn't have the circulation the advertisers deserve.

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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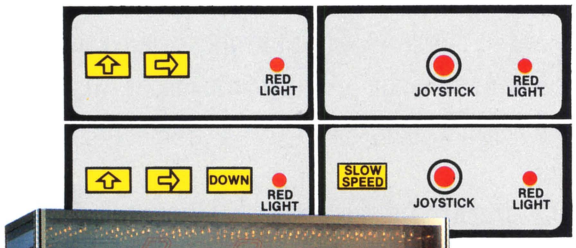

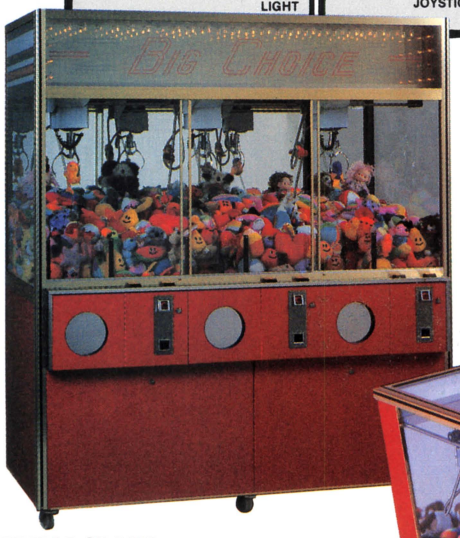

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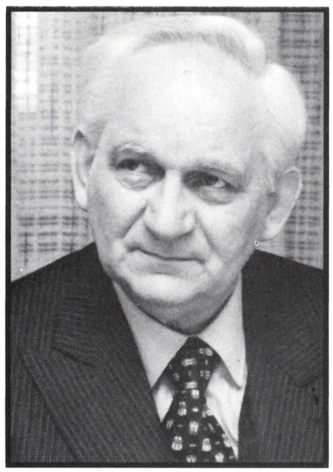
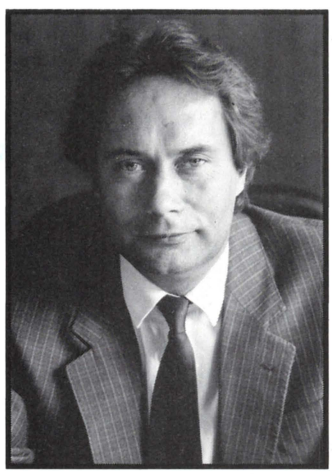


Wilhelm Menke



Ullrich Schulze

In 1953, three German men, Herbert Nacke, Gerhardt Schulze, and Wilhelm Menke, lent their last name first initials to a new company and went into business. The company's first product was the *Rotamint Slot Machine* invented by Menke. It was the first slot machine in Germany to incorporate an electromechanical device. The company worked closely with Loewen Apparatebru, a company specializing in the distribution of amusement machines. The two companies merged in 1984.

NSM began importing phonographs into the U.S. in 1968 through an agent in California and later through Burt Davidson in Chicago.

In 1978 Russ Strahan was invited to help NSM set up its own American factory-owned facility and Loewen-America, literally the "lion in America," was incorporated in January of 1979.

Nacke is now retired and the company is owned as a partnership by Menke and Schultze's son, Ullrich, and run by a board of directors which includes Schulze and Menke. Arnold Nieswand is the production manager, Heinz Buder, the financial manager, and Peter L. Kuhn, the marketing manager.

NSM's primary product is a wall-mounted payout machine. It's an electronic slot machine with wheels that spin on a surface instead of the usual reel type. Although, it is the single largest product, it is built strictly for the German home market and not exported. Phonographs are a large part of NSM's production and are shipped all over the world.

Play Meter asked Russ what he thought about the jukebox industry and this is what he said: "Right now all the changes taking place--video phonographs, compact discs, etc.--are good for the jukebox industry. The single most important thing it's doing is opening up new locations that were not open to music operators in the past. In effect, it's increasing the base for coin-op music. I believe the CD will probably become the medium at some point in the future but there's still a number of things holding it back--like the high cost of material."

He continued, "Though the CD is expensive, I think there will come a time when all the material that anyone wants will be on CD and the demand will be filled. I think the pressing plants are now running somewhat behind the demand."

Summing up, he added, "For 50 years we have been taking money from those who want to play music and one way or another we will be taking money for music for another 50 years." ▒

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The CD box: A revolution, but for how long?

by Rusty Storbeck

This much is certain: when Seeburg introduced its CD jukebox last year, it dared the rest of the industry into the future. Forget the 45, Seeburg said, we'll use a laser to read a 4-3/4-inch metal disc that spins at 200 rpms and has digitized information machined onto its surface in the form of pits and bumps. It will be virtually indestructible, and the sound will be clear, precise, and undistorted.

After 30 years of vinyl, that's not change--it's science fiction. And that's pretty close to Harvey Campbell's view of things. Campbell is president of Mobile Records in Pittsburgh. "The CD," he says, "is today in the future." He's definitely sold on the notion that CDs are where it's at. In fact, Mobile Records has been a "7-inch house" for 25 years, Campbell says, but he now feels that the CD box is the "ultimate" jukebox. "It took 35 years to come up with something better than the LP, and this is it."

There is some good data available to back up Campbell's optimism. Figures released by the Recording Industry Association of America--a Washington-based trade group of record companies that includes CBS, RCA, MCA, Warner Bros., PolyGram, Capitol, Atlantic, A&M, Electra, Arista, and Chrysalis--show the burgeoning growth of the CD market. In 1983, for example, the number of CDs sold by record companies in the U.S. to retailers (manufacturer unit shipments) was .8 million. After rising to 5.8 million in 1984, that figure leapt to 22.6 million in 1985 and 53 million in 1986. An editor at *Radio & Record* magazine told Play Meter that it's not unreasonable to expect sales to double, in 1987, to 100 million.

The Electronic Industries Association, another Washington-based trade group, estimates that three million CD players were sold in 1986 either as stand-alone units or as components of an audio package. That's two million above the figure for 1985. More than 4.5 million are expected to be sold to retailers in 1987. Without a doubt, the CD is rapidly becoming a part of America's music landscape.

Presumably, Seeburg wants to "get in on the ground floor" of the CD's rise to the top. But there's a marketing angle, too, one that involves timing. Or perhaps "time" is a better word, as in "It's time to get serious." Joseph Pankus, executive vice president for Seeburg explains it this way. "For the last 10 or 15 years," he says, "because most people thought the video-game revenues would never end, they ultimately gave the music away. We feel that *LaserMusic* is a way for operators to start making money in the music business again."

The plan? Put out a state-of-the-art box that would make an audio engineer whistle with glee, and raise the price of the music. In other words, with the laser, say good-bye to quarter play. It's three plays for $1, no ifs, ands, or buts. In fact, don't even look for the coin chute--there isn't any.

Has it worked? From all appearances, yes. So far, at least. Seeburg has sold around 1,500 machines, according to Pankus. Reports from some parts of the country have collections at upwards of 20-25 percent above those with the older technology. Seeburg claims that the cashbox will average $125-$275 a week in gross collections in locations that have a patron-count of between 500 and 1,000 a week. Pankus says that some locations have reported as high as $300 a week with counts as low as $250.

However, Rowe took a different approach, giving operators the chance to test CD in combination with the familiar 45s. Tony Urso, Madison Coin Machine Co., Madison, Wisc., sees this as the best way to go. He puts oldies on the 45s and new releases on the CDs. And though some may argue that the combination is only testing the water many are not ready to jump into the unknown. While Seeburg is struggling, not only to push a new concept in music, but to establish its reputation, Rowe represents stability to many. Some who may be willing to test the CD concept because of Rowe's box, may not be as willing with a dedicated unit from Seeburg.

Mel Sonier, president of the Philadelphia distributorship Eastern Music Systems, and by no means an apologist for the Seeburg CD, has some strong opinions on why the higher price-per-play is working. Operators, he says, must realize that the jukebox scene is vastly different from the video-game scene. Here's how Sonier sees it. Players, he says, go into arcades for the expressed purpose of playing a game. The video game market, therefore, is a "priced-to-play" market. Not so with jukeboxes.

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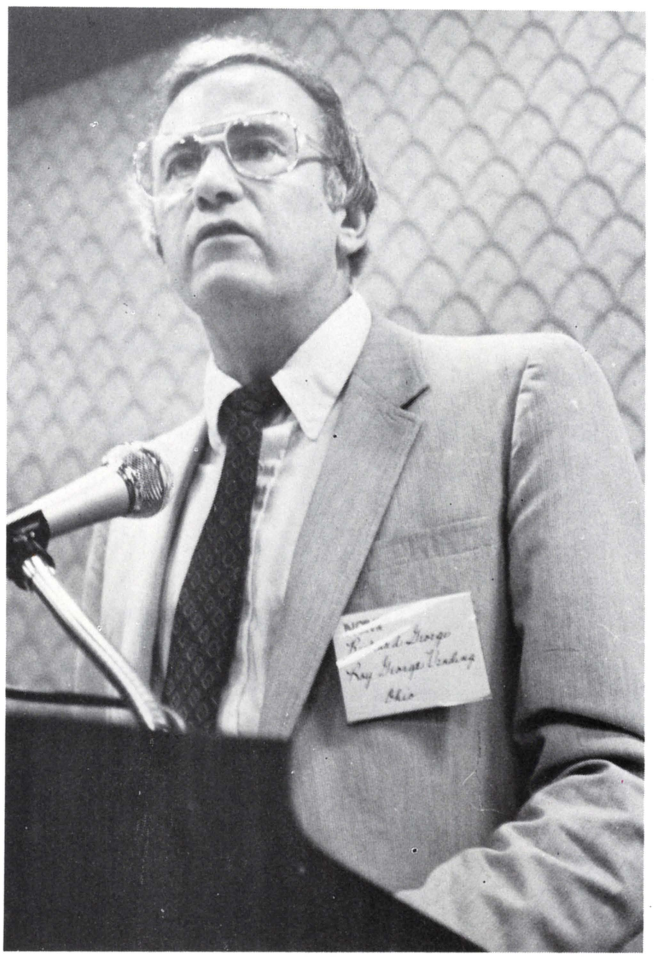
The patrons of a jukebox location--in most cases, a bar--don't go to the location to play music. They go for other reasons. The jukebox, however, becomes a part of their environment the minute they set foot in the door. And if they want music, Sonier says, they're willing to pay whatever price the operator sells it for. The clientele at jukebox locations, Sonier says, have plenty of money. In economics, that willingness to pay any price is called inelastic demand.

Sonier told Play Meter that he had placed more than 45 Rowe combo units on the street by mid-April and had received no negative comments about price-per-play.

There are some who would argue that three plays for $1 is a mistake. Dick George, of Roy George Music, is not one of them. "We have two Seeburg CD jukeboxes," George says. "My plan is to try to install one a month for the balance of '87."



Dick George

George is not at all disturbed by the higher price tag on the music. In fact, it has helped him work out a commission schedule for his CD locations that guarantees him a minimum of $150 a week and lowers the location's commission from 40 percent to 30 percent.

Not everyone, however, is in love with Seeburg's dedicated unit. One Florida distributor (who doesn't handle Seeburg or Rowe) told Play Meter, "I personally feel that the industry is not really ready for it, (not) in a big way at least." He cites the "cost factor." Although he likes the quality of the sound and the longevity of the disc, he says the average jukebox location in Florida won't support the CD. Why not? An operator changes four to 10 singles a week, he says. That's at a cost of between $1.50 and $1.60 apiece. If operators have to change four to 10 CDs a week, at a cost of around $11 apiece, the cost, he says, will be prohibitive.

If anything, however, those complaints--whether well-founded or not--represent "second-hand" experience, as it were. Some of the heaviest fire that the Seeburg CD draws comes, not surprisingly, from those who are directly associated, in some fashion, with the Rowe *45/CD Combo* jukebox. Mind you, the critics are not blind to the good that Seeburg's unit has injected into the industry, or even to the positive features of the box itself. But they see the "revolutionary" ground that Seeburg has broken as an unnecessary gamble, and an unwise one at that.

As far as Mel Sonier's concerned, Seeburg has overprogrammed the coin-op location. With 10-12 titles on a CD, he says, 50 CDs are just "too much music" for any one spot. Although a 600+ selection would seem to make it easier to please a location's clientele, Sonier thinks it's a waste. He contends that no more than a few CDs from that huge selection account for 95 percent of the play that the jukebox gets. The reason, he says, is that the music tastes among the clientele at a given location tend to be similar, making 60 CDs overkill. And at $11-$12 a shot, expensive overkill for the operator.

Enter the 45, that not-quite-so-compact vinyl disc that just turned 37 this year and is, many assert, alive and well in the 300,000 to 500,000 jukeboxes across the country. As a music carrier, its role has evolved over the years, but its importance, Sonier maintains, has not diminished.

Historically, 45s were the sole vehicles for new releases. Only later were albums cut, as compilations of the 45s. Gradually, however, a greater emphasis on artists recognition and album play all but removed the 45 from the consumer market. If 45s were not cut at the same time as albums, they were issued in fewer numbers and their primary role became that of promotional packages sent to radio stations for airplay. The "consumer" market for 45s became limited to jukebox operators, who began using them, in most cases, to program requests into their machines.

If the value of the 45 seems almost gutted by the changes that have taken place over the years, however, or if the 45 seems little more than an old technology biding its time until a newer, improved way of doing things comes along, it might be a good idea to look again. Make no mistake, Sonier says, the promotional role of the 45 will keep it around for a long time. There's simply nothing on the horizon to replace it. The cassette single? No, the packaging is too expensive. The single CD? Impractical--costs too much to press. The CD album? Out of the question at this point. Besides, Sonier says, the vinyl album was never able to knock the 45 out during the 37 years they co-existed. What makes anyone think the CD--nothing more than a "high-tech" album--will have better luck?

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Bill Kraft

Bill Kraft, vice president of sales and marketing for Shaffer Distributing, the exclusive distributor for Rowe International music and vending in Ohio, points out that a good many titles available on 45 are not yet available on CD. Although compilations--packages of "hits" taken from an artist's career or from several artists--are said to be among the fastest growing categories in record-label releases, Kraft says--and rightly so--that it'll take a good while to get everything compiled.

Sandy Zeglin is the one-stop manager for Lieberman Music in Minneapolis. He makes another point, one that suggests that the demise of the 45 is anything but just around the corner. When a CD or any other album format is released, he says, the record label releases a 45-rpm record of at least one of the cuts it expects to be a hit. In fact, Zeglin explains, a single often is released two to four weeks before the album, which puts music in the 45s-only box well before it reaches the dedicated-CD box and *while* it's getting its first heavy airplay.

Those who find themselves on the dedicated side of the fence, however, counter with a strong argument. The tables, they say, are turned when subsequent singles, taken from the same, already released album, are themselves released. In this case, it's the CD operator whose music has been making him money early on.

That, according to Sonier, is where the value of the CD comes into play--filling the void left by the absence of timely placed, newly released singles. And that, according to Rowe, is where the value of the combination 45/CD unit comes in. A smart operator can have what Rowe's Jerry Gordon calls the "best of both worlds."

Urso, with five Rowe combos on location, would agree with that. He's also quite vocal about what he sees as the strengths and weaknesses of both the Rowe CD and the Seeburg CD.

Although Urso insists that he's not "down on the Seeburg" (he credits the company with having rejuvenated the jukebox industry), he's nevertheless ready to spar on any number of points. Are the CDs themselves responsible for the higher collections operators are witnessing? Yes, but better programming has a lot to do with it, and opportunities for that have always been around. Did Seeburg make a mistake by not putting a coin slot on its machine? Yes. In fact, he sets his machines at four plays for $1, and he "splits the price" (something Rowe itself is adamantly opposed to). Is he satisfied with the 20 percent boost he's seen in his collections? Yes, especially since his investment in the Rowe unit was between

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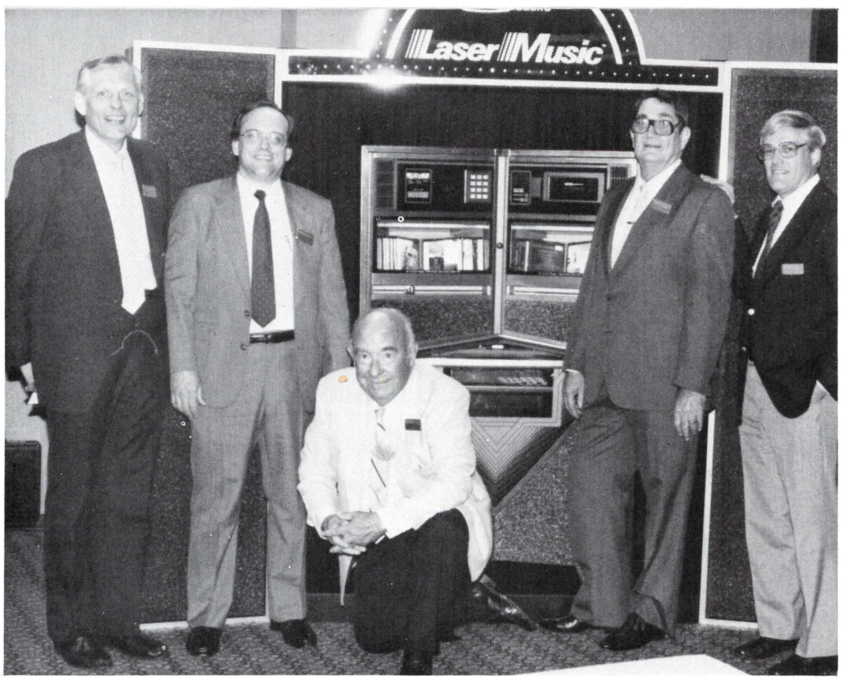
two-thirds and three-fourths that are required for Seeburg's CD. Urso doesn't put much stock in the notion that music is sold through artist recognition, and he sees the one-hit group as a troublemaker for the CD box.

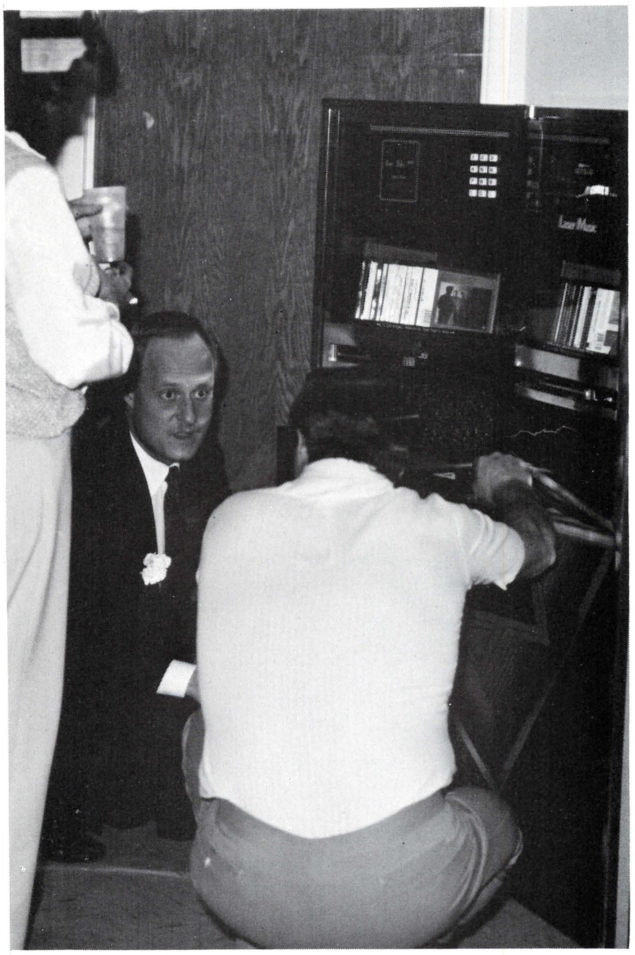
Urso's biggest complaint about Seeburg's dedicated model, however, is a complaint that a number of others have, too. To him, and to them, the CD jukebox could very well be what he calls a "glitch," that is, a temporary technological detour. "The whole configuration of compact discs may be totally different a year from now," says Kraft. Urso talks about the R&D that's being done right now on something called the EPROM chip, a computer chip onto which he says thousands of singles could be "burned in." The future, he says, is really still up for grabs.

Would Mel Sonier venture to guess where the CD jukebox is headed? Wherever the music industry takes it, he says. Then he adds: "If they put music on pancakes, we better be able to play pancakes."

Rowe introduced its *45/CD Combo* jukebox at the 1986 AMOA.



Present for Seeburg's *Laser Music* debut in June 1986 are, left to right: Joe Pankus, Nick Hindman, Bob Breither, Ed Blankenbeckler and George Hook.



Tom Siemieniec of Seeburg explains the finer points of *Laser Music.*

Darts...

Electronic darts are being touted as the most important development in years for coin-operators in the amusement & music industry. Why? Because dart games on location attract regular — even loyal — players. In short, a potential year-round bonanza!

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The Amusement & Music Operators Association has formed the AMOA National Dart Association. Its sole purpose is to increase operator and player interest in competitive dart teams and league activity nationwide. To this end, it sanctions players sponsored by AMOA National Dart Association member operators. It also has developed standardized rules & regulations — including handicapping criteria — to provide equal competitive opportunity throughout the country. Additionally, each spring it sponsors the AMOA National Team Dart Tournament to recognize the best teams and players. And it has produced an operator's handbook — as well as a video and cassette tapes — on "How to Organize Dart Leagues."

To join the AMOA National Dart Association an operator must first be a member of AMOA.

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For more information on the AMOA National Dart Association — or AMOA membership, programs and services — call or write today!

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Marketing service offers newly released singles

For years now, jukebox operators have been the "stepchildren" of the music industry, the last to find out what's hot and what's not. Claudia Welker wants to change that.

The former retail promotion director at MTM Records has started a Nashville-based mailing service that enables operators to test out newly released singles. Here's how it works.

As soon as a 45 is "charted," which is about two weeks after it's gotten its very first radio play, Welker mails the operator a packet that includes the single itself, a biography of the artist, a title strip, and a color acetate strip (to attract attention to title.)

The packet also contains a postcard the operator returns after two weeks. It asks questions about the number of plays the title got, the general response to the record, the number of copies the operator would like to order, and whether or not this was the first time the operator has ever ordered this artist. There's also a space for comments.

Welker uses the replies to write a report to the artist and the label.

How does this help the operator? It involves him in the front end of the marketing process instead of the tail end. Specifically, it gives him an opportunity to have a single on his jukebox while it's getting airplay, rather than after it has peaked. "Advance awareness of what's available" is how Welker puts it.

Welker says the service is geared primarily toward newer artists. Most of the artists are country western right now, but she does have R&B and pop record accounts. Her portfolio at MTM included artists like Judy Rodman, Girls Next Door, SKO, Holly Dunn, and the Voltage Brothers.

Welker says 360 operators have subscribed to her mailing list so far. The cost to operators: nothing.

Tony Urso, Madison Coin Machine, Madison, Wisc., says that operators should get involved. "I see this as a wonderful opportunity for operators. You see what else I see coming--say this formula is working very well for her. I see placement money like with cigarettes for some of these records. Of course, I may be five miles down the road."

Claudia Welker

He added, "I think we should get behind this lady. It is not costing operators anything, but I think she is right on track with maybe too much ambition for this industry!

"Of course, there's always skepticism but if we help her out on the ground floor, when she's big time she'll still have time for our industry, which is one thing that labels now just don't have. We are nothing to them."

For more information, call 615/329-9933 or write Specialized Coin Operators Marketing Service, 112 21st Avenue South, Suite 204, Nashville, TN 37203.

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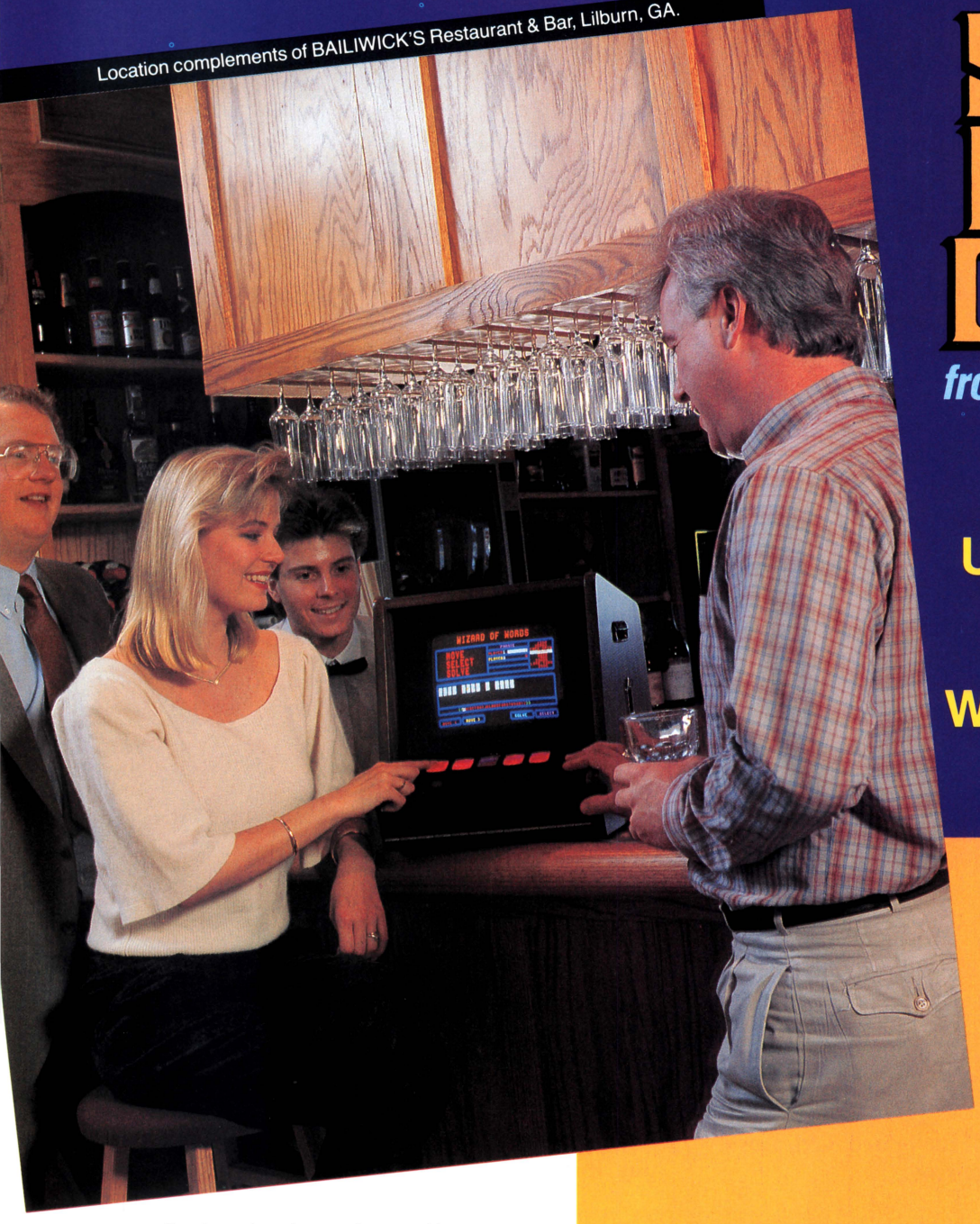

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ASK THE OPERATOR

Q:

Do you have CD jukeboxes? If so, what do you think of them? If not, why not?"

A: Richard A Cary, president, Capital Music, Inc., Helena, Montana:

"We started to convert one [Rowe], got it all together, spent some time playing it, but before we put it on the route, we decided against it, because of the delicacy of the thing. I don't think it would stand up in some of our places, especially the hotter, or rougher, places." Cary said he also feels requests can't be handled well enough with the CDs. "We have a lot of picky people up here."

A: Raymond R. Schroth, Vend-Music Services, Inc., Hermiston, Oregon:

"No, I do not have CD jukeboxes. I'm not that familiar [with them], and therefore not convinced that I have the need at this time."

A: Larry Powell, chairman of the board, C&L Music & Games, Sacramento, California:

"No, we don't have any yet. There's no need for it [CD] yet." Powell feels that the quality of the sound is lost in most locations, which, he says, doesn't justify the cost of the CD box. He adds this about when the market will be ready for CD boxes: "When the 45s go, the CD will be here."

A: Bonnie Morin, O'Connor Music, Danielson, Connecticut:

"We have two [Seeburgs] on the road right now. So far, they're good money-makers. We hope they're reliable." Morin explained that one of the machines did have some problems at one point, but everyone at O'Connor hopes it was just an isolated incident. She adds: "We haven't had them long enough to form an educated opinion of them."

A: Jim Hayes, president, Gem Music & Vending Company, Inc., Dayton, Ohio:

"We have two Seeburgs. We're happy with them--they've got a definite place. However, we feel we've got to get our money out of them fast because the software for the jukeboxes is in a state of flux and uncertainty."

A: Vincent Marcello, president, Jefferson Music Co., Inc., Gretna, Louisiana:

"Yes, I have two [Rowe combo units]. I like them a lot. Collections are good on them, better than those I've had on the regular jukeboxes." Marcello has had the Rowes since late February.

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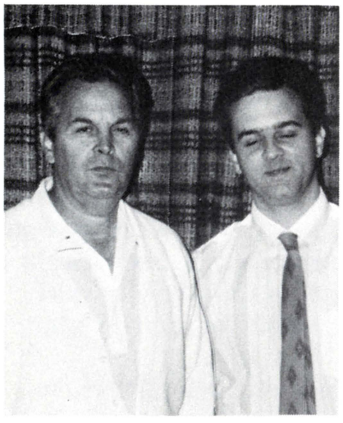
"If the operator learned anything out of the video market it is that you have to diversify and take care of *all* your businesses."

BY VALERIE COGNEVICH



Gene Urso and Tony Urso

Gene and his son Tony of Madison Coin Machine Company in Madison, Wisconsin, are Play Meter's first father/son interview. The two don't always agree, but as Gene once said, the younger generation is giving new lifeblood to the industry, and Tony is a fitting example.

Gene was a 22 year old, just out of the service in 1956 when Nate Robinson, who had gone to school with Gene's father, approached Gene's uncle about starting a company. Since Gene was unemployed, thinking about going to barber school, his uncle passed the offer to him and even backed Gene financially. Gene and Nate ran the company together until 1972 when Gene bought his partner out. In 1969 Gene's son Tony, though only nine, started showing an interest in the business, accompanying his dad on sales and collection calls. When the company became a one-man operation after Nate's departure, Tony said Gene would often pull him out of school to help out. Tony continued being a part of his dad's company, working summers until he finally went full time in December of 1983.

Although I could have talked with them all day about many more subjects, this interview focused on jukeboxes.

Did you make any drastic changes in your jukebox route during the video boom?

GENE: We still maintained the jukebox part of our route although many operators neglected that part of their business. We may have cut down a little on new purchases but we kept rotating our jukeboxes. All of our jukeboxes are five years old or newer. When my partner was still active in this company, we were strictly on a 50/50 basis and it just wasn't working because we weren't getting our return on music. Then we decided that we had X-amount out of each box and went to our customers with it and they accepted it. Now, although our boxes are still on 50/50, we have a minimum.

Did that arrangement help you to reinvest more of the profit into better programming or equipment?

GENE: We put better sound systems and speakers in the locations. We got more conscious of making the most of the jukebox. Instead of just automatically putting a new jukebox or speakers where the old ones were, we may move them to a better traffic area or hang better speakers in more strategic spots. We also became more aware of acoustics. What I'm saying is that we knew our collections were higher, so we were putting more into it.

So your collections grew as a result?

GENE: Yes, I think they have. What do you think, Tony?

TONY: Oh, definitely. Our collections have grown because of that and our programming. We are very advanced in our programming.

I'm glad you brought programming up. How important is it really?

GENE: Before you jump in, Tony, let me just say one thing. One of the problems our company had, and I'm going way, way back and before Tony came, is that once we got to know someone at the record companies, they would come in and of course, every RCA

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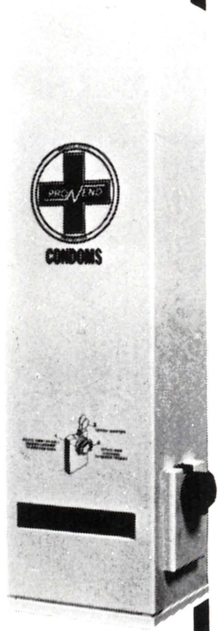

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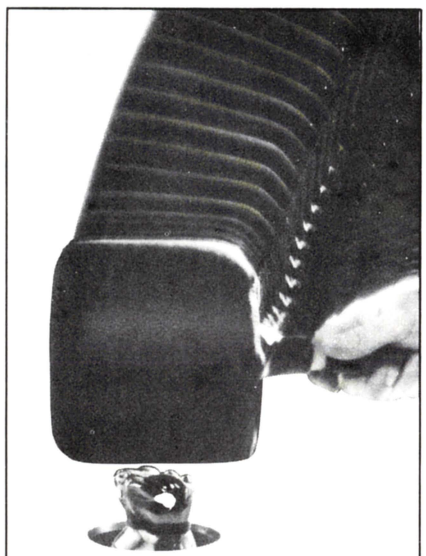

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record or Columbia--whichever company was doing the convincing--was a hit! So we were basically buying records without a whole lot of thought about locations. Then we started relying on the one stop we were buying records from. Then Tony got into the business. And because of his age, he was more into the music than I was so he was buying records differently than we had been. We started looking at each and every location.

TONY: One thing we had been very short on several years ago was oldies. Our average spot right now has about 40 percent oldies; some are 100 percent.

That seems like an awfully big percent.

TONY: And, frankly I'm thinking about stepping it up. Oldies are a key thing that operators just don't take advantage of. There are, however, tricks you have to know. That's why we look at the computer list of the most-played songs in each location. If it's a hard rock place, look for the hard rock oldies. You have to know what will play. In my market, 50s music just doesn't play; 60s does as long as it's not Motown. There are some 80s songs that are playing now as oldies. Another thing with oldies is that you increase selections on your jukeboxes. Even if it's a 200-selection box, there's really only 100 songs that are valuable. But many oldies records are double sided hits so you increase your valuable tunes.

You seem to know what you're talking about, but how did you get to that point?

TONY: First, I have to put in a plug for Lieberman's Music. You cannot up-play that company enough. Those guys have been gods for us and their oldies catalog is a bible as far as I'm concerned. We look at the top songs on each jukebox to determine which oldies to use. For example U2 is something current. After we see that it is going somewhere or we have a gut feeling it will be a hit, we find an oldie from that group, which in this case was a double-sided hit, so instead of having just one U2 hit, we have three hits. The key to our whole jukebox programming operation is coordinating with radio stations in Madison. We find out what they are pushing, get their charts, and listen to feedback. There is a station in town that has gone from zero to third place almost entirely because of oldies. If they are going to push a certain song, we will get that song on our boxes. The last thing I read is record charts. These are a reaction to the market and way too late to help me. By the time *Frozen Ghost* reached the record charts, we had been on that song about three weeks and two radio stations had just picked it up. I don't even think Billboard has it yet.

GENE: OK, Tony, you just gave all of our secrets to our competition.

Claudia Welker is implementing a program that seems to go hand in hand with what you are saying about not getting the songs fast enough. I understand you are very positive about it. Could you explain why?

TONY: She was with MTM records working with Judy Rodman, Holly Dunn, and others. Now she's set up Welker Marketing to work with artists. As part of her program, she will be sending operators who are interested advance releases of certain records to put on their jukeboxes and send her feedback as to whether they like it. Hopefully, that will spur sales. From her standpoint, if operators like the record, they will buy more records. It won't cost operators anything. And I'm hoping the title strip companies will develop a special one to make it stand out. [editor's note: see the story in this issue about Claudia's program and how operators can get information.]

GENE: An operator must be aware of what songs he puts on the jukebox. If in three weeks the song has not gotten but one or two plays, he may have put it on too soon or he may have bought a dog but he must know the difference. I just checked on a record that was put on two weeks ago that only had one play. I left it because I don't think it's a dog.

TONY: But that is the downside of that

system; you can also get a little too far advanced. But when you say that the operator gets records too slow, I blame the operator. When operators say their jukebox route is no good, or they're into leasing which is a real Catch 22, I can only think it is their own fault.

Why is leasing such a bad idea?

TONY: If an operator puts a jukebox in a location and gets X-amount per week, there's no incentive for the operator to make that jukebox go any further.

GENE: Leasing is not completely bad if you get into a fraternal order organization where there is no money to be made. You are better off leasing it. You get your money and they get all the headaches. But if you have any kind of music spot, even if it isn't doing very well, there's a certain sense of pride involved. You will try to program it right and try to bring it up because you will be getting more money.

Are there many operators leasing jukeboxes?

GENE: Probably more than you think. In the last year and a half I have heard more about leasing. It's the easiest way out.

TONY: You can get lazy because no matter what happens, you can let that jukebox rot and never change a record, and you're still getting your guarantee. Operators are getting all wound up that their music route is nothing when they don't take the time to do it right.

GENE: But Tony, I think you are forgetting something else. It depends on the area you are in. We don't have the strong video market which helps our jukebox business. It's all relative.

TONY: But I really believe that if I could spend a week at one of those operations whose owners are complaining about the music, I could turn it around. That is a strong, strong statement but I believe that many operators are missing the boat with programming.

GENE: I agree with you but again what I'm saying is that Valerie asked earlier

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what did we do during the video boom; there is another boom going on right now--poker games. There is absolutely no enforcement and there are a lot of places that have them. There is a tendency to chase that a little more when it seems to be a money maker.

TONY: But there is a difference between an experienced company and a non-experienced one. We have been through that video boom/bust and understand that you can't be chasing after rainbows. Like these guys that set up just crane companies or just darts or just compact disc jukeboxes, they are specialized too much, they didn't diversify, and sometimes they don't know what in the hell they are doing in the first place. There are 27 crane manufacturers, that's insane! But we know that next year there won't be that many.

GENE: If the operator learned anything out of the video market it is that you have to diversify and take care of *all* your businesses. We are in the entertainment business, we are not just in the video market, we are not just in the crane business--we are in them but we're not *just* in them. It's nice when something like video or cranes comes along and operators can make some good money, but we have to keep our perspectives in line.

What factors have had serious effects on your jukebox business?

GENE: The most dramatic has been the tougher drinking laws. Now everyone is gone from the taverns by 10:30 when they used to stay until one. There are only so many hours so you have to give customers a reason for coming to some of these places.

How do you feel clients perceive a jukebox and how do you decide how to program it?

TONY: First, the majority of the time it is a proven fact that customers have to have heard a song on the radio before they will play it on the jukebox: but we can never just take that philosophy for granted. I have to know what is current and what my market is for each location. If it's a 35 years old and up location I will probably program it different than I would for a location for 21 year olds. I know there are certain locations that I won't even put a record on unless it has reached the top 10.

But that seems like a contradiction of what we talked about earlier when you said you needed to know what records were coming out before they reached the record charts.

TONY: It just depends on the location. There are two viewpoints and we have to be aware of both. There are some places where the customers will play anything as long as it's brand new so we try to go that way. Others, and I'm thinking of one particular location, a song has to be playing on one of the radio stations and must be in the top 10 before customers even consider playing it.

GENE: But on that jukebox Tony mentioned, I'd say 60 percent of it is oldies and we're thinking about upping that percent.

You seem very excited about how your jukebox business is doing. How do you decide which songs to buy for a certain location, besides looking at the top songs played and going from there?

GENE: We sit in the location while people are playing. We'll try to assess whether its an old or young crowd, western or modern, or hard rock. The best way to determine that is during cocktail hour. We also go in the morning because it may be a different group. Some will say that requests are extremely important but you may have one bartender that likes one song and another that likes different ones so you have to be careful about depending on requests too much. What we try to do is program a little generic at first. After we program a box we monitor it closely to see which songs are stronger. The feel of being in there and seeing the clientele is very important.

Does it seem like oldies are playing a more important part of jukebox programming than it used to?

TONY: Every time we go to a place we try to bring at least one or two oldies. Some operators think, "OK, now we're going to try oldies. We'll just throw them on the jukebox and damn, we're going to make money now because I read it in Play Meter." First of all he won't know which ones to try so it may be the wrong ones. Then six months later he'll say, "Oh well, it didn't work for me!" But it's a live and learn thing. You have to keep it fresh. You wouldn't leave cigarettes in a cigarette machine for six months. Face it, a jukebox is really a radio station that you can have as much input as you want to put quarters into. You want to hear that U2 song right now, put in a quarter and it's taken care of. It seems to go in cycles like every five or seven years. Oldies are such a staple thing that it is really sad that operators don't even look at that market enough. How do I know which oldies to go in a new place? I know from the chart I get every month showing the top 20 songs. Last year Tommy James' *Draggin' the Line* was the number one song; anything by CCR (Credence Clearwater Revival) rated high; if a song ranks anywhere in the top 20, I'm going to go find an oldie from them to go in that box. Patsy Cline in country spots was the biggest surprise. What else do we look at? What's playing at the coliseum; what's playing on MTV; and current events. If Jim Reeves dies, his songs will be played on the radio, so we will follow that trend for our jukeboxes. I think Patsy Cline was so popular because they were playing her music in conjunction with the movie about her life. The oldies, and I cannot say it enough, are doing well.

The feeling for nostalgia also is shown in the remakes of the classic jukeboxes. Do you have any of them out?

TONY: No, but I wish I did. That Rowe one is probably the prettiest box there is. People look at them and say, "WOW!"

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and there is a new surge in music. People are very aware of music in our area.

GENE: The other thing about the nostalgia is that some locations are starting to make their decor fit for a classic. They are more conscience of theme. I've even seen locations with antique motifs with antique pinballs. A remake of a classic would be perfect for those locations. TONY:

Right now the question seems to be whether compact disc will replace 45s. As an operator, how do you feel about it?

TONY: This is something we have been looking seriously into since August. I have been to a couple of seminars. We have some Rowes because it has the capacity of holding 45s and CDs. I don't look at it going with the combination as just sticking my toe in the water, I think it is the way the market is going to go. The dedicated unit is at least a couple of years ahead of itself. I also think that people do not want to pay 3 for $1.00. There is a fancy survey out that you can have 1,200 selections on the Seeburg box, but that is misleading. Even though you can get 10 or 12 songs per CD and you have 60 CDs on the jukebox, there is really only a few on each album that are worth anything. The albums do not make the market. Like I said before, people generally have to hear a song on the radio before they will play it on a jukebox. Seeburg's contention is that if they can get the album on, they are way ahead of the market. Yes and no. If you are a poor programmer, it would be an advantage for you to buy one of those Seeburgs and put oldies in it. Your income would probably increase.

GENE: One other reason we didn't go with the Seeburg is that although Seeburg is very innovative and the CD sound is the best sound I've ever heard, the company outdates itself too quick.

TONY: Another thing that is misleading is thinking that people select by artist. I get requests on napkins and someone wants a song called *Do Waa*. What Seeburg is telling me is not what is really happening. The single will always promote the album--not the other way around.

Since I am close to forty, I can safely say that back when I was a teenager, we weren't as familiar with the artists because there was no MTV or these other vehicles for promoting artists. Don't you think that maybe kids are more aware of artists today?

TONY: This is one thing that Seeburg has contradicted itself on. On the one hand, it is saying artist only. But the oldies that are any good were all cut on 45s. They became hits on 45s. Take the Monkey's theme song. You hear it because it was a hit but you don't see the other eight songs off the album. Seeburg's contention is that albums are playing. But if I put the Monkey's original album on a jukebox, so what. I would rather have the best of the Monkey's which were all cut on 45s.

GENE: Seeburg also did a very good thing. It has provided a tool that, if the operator uses it right, can change his commission structure and his pricing. Most jukeboxes are one for a quarter, three for a half dollar, seven for a dollar. Seeburg gave the operator a vehicle to charge three for a dollar. Now the only one that is going to louse up that pricing is the operator himself. Seeburg made operators aware of music again, made them aware of pricing, and made them take a hard look at their music routes. If you were doing your job to start with it wouldn't have been that big of a surprise, but if you weren't, you may buy a CD and have it do $200 where the old one was doing $80.

TONY: I believe, though, that if you take any one of our jukeboxes and knock the coin slot out, forcing bills only, and set pricing at three or four for a dollar, I bet you that our income will do almost the same thing.

GENE: Another thing that is deceiving is an operator that is doing $400 with a jukebox. He replaces it with a Seeburg, cuts the pricing in half and now he's doing $500. By rights that jukebox should have done $800 with the same play if the operator hadn't loused up the pricing Seeburg set. But it went up only 20 percent which will probably hold pretty steady. It doesn't seem worth it considering the cost of the equipment. Now although older people may not be as aware of artists or quality, the younger crowds are more up on music. So the quality may come into play in certain younger locations.

Since you have admitted that the sound quality is superior with a CD, do people complain when 45s are played from the same jukebox as with the Rowe unit?

TONY: No, they don't and we have quite a few of those out. We are putting mostly oldies on in the 45s and new CDs. Most of the oldies were probably cut in mono or analog stereo instead of digital. So there is a natural difference in sound on new and old. You can also split pricing and get premium for the CD.

GENE: But as far as complaints about sound quality, we put better sound systems out that would really be called for. So even if a record is mono, although there is really no comparison to CD quality, with our speakers even that mono 45 sounds good. We also get the most out of the CDs with the speakers.

TONY: Another thing I would like to mention, is that the point of purchase advertising are your title strips. Many operators just throw one in or hand write it--absolutely not allowed in our company. Every oldie is marked with a purple title strip--period. If it's green, it's country. There are no exceptions. Customers get used to the pattern. If they are looking for country/western, they know to look for green, etc.

What are your feelings about having only a bill acceptor or only a coin slot?

TONY: I like having both. Now people are saying there is a movement to go with bills only but I don't know if I buy that. If the jukebox ever jams, you have an alternate way to get that income.

GENE: I also like something else about having both. Sometimes a guy is sitting

there with a little change and he'll get rid of the change. It's the same reason the dime pinball was probably the fastest money grabbing machine we ever saw. When a kid asked his dad for a dime, the father wouldn't realize he gave him ten dimes. When he gave him four quarters, he knew it. When he gave him a dollar bill, he sure knew it. I only have so much time to make so much money so I'll take all the options I can.

TONY: Operators are selling time for money. So I like to have both ways to get the customer to part with his money.

Do you think the CD jukebox will open new locations?

GENE: Yes and no. In the 40s everyone was dancing around the jukebox and I can see that happening again. Operators will make up their minds that they can sell their jukeboxes again.

TONY: I think that there is the perception that Seeburg has come along with the Cadillac of jukeboxes. It's like raising prices: I'll give you 75 reasons why I don't want to buy Play Meter for $1.50 but if you charge $2.00, I'll still buy it. It goes back to what I said about Seeburg offering operators a tool--it gives him the confidence to change pricing because he has his mind made up to do so. He just didn't have his mind made up before to do it. Seeburg has given him the incentive and the perception to go out and do what he probably could have done anyway with his old boxes.

GENE: I disagree with you a little there, Tony. Seeburg gave you a tremendous sound system where players think they are getting more for their value and the public views it as something new, something innovative. It will be easier for the operator to do something with it.

TONY: But the operator finally sat down and started asking locations questions like, "How much do you pay your DJ?" and then telling him he could bring a jukebox in that would satisfy customers and put extra money in the location owner's pocket. The location owner may agree to give it a try IF it is a Seeburg. However, I still think a confident operator could do it with a regular jukebox if he adds a good sound system. I think the operator has been so starved to find the next hit video game that he is putting too much hope in the CD jukebox. He probably hasn't been doing his job to begin with.

GENE: We are seeing more and more locations that are realizing that they just can't afford live entertainment. So an operator can put in a jukebox and no matter what the location/operator split, the location is making money.

TONY: I think the elaborate sound systems made popular during the disco days are being phased out. One, the operators are getting into gear and doing good programming again. Basically, they were not filling a need and the sound systems filled that need. Operators are once again filling that need--fresh quality product. Second, all of a sudden, locations are realizing that their thousand dollar stereo systems are a thousand dollars. It's not an inflow, whereas if they replaced it with a jukebox, the income will go up. Third, although I have no need for ASCAP, they are driving that music business out. They are collecting fees from locations playing their own music. You can't just throw your own stereo in a tavern anymore because now you don't just buy a thousand dollar stereo, you also have to pay $500 a year for license fees.

GENE: I think the tavern business is like the jukebox business because they go through phases. It was nice having their own stereos with songs the tavern owners thought their customers wanted. So this was a phase. We had a location that had an unbelievable background system so we informed him we were taking our jukebox out. I don't know what got to him, but he has now taken out his system and asked us to leave the jukebox. We went in and rearranged his speakers, added a few more, and are going to program it the way we want to. I think location owners find out fast that there is no income in putting in a stereo system. The tavern business is hurting a little now so owners are starting to look closely at everything.

How do you feel about video jukeboxes?

TONY: We are thinking about trying them. I have heard a lot about them--it depends on the location, depends on the traffic, etc.

GENE: I was just with some AMOA board members who say theirs are very successful. The ones that have video jukeboxes out swear by them more than the CD.

There's always speculation about where the market will go. Do you have some thoughts on that?

TONY: E-prom jukeboxes. There is already a unit in England, I think. It's a jukebox that won't have any moving parts. Music would be on computer chips just like in video games. There could be an erasable prom so I could call Lieberman and say I want these 15 oldies and they would burn them into a computer chip. I would add them just like I would any other chip. I have heard that this digital stuff is here to stay and that CD is a big deal. But I've also heard whimperings that until the money is recouped on CDs, the E-prom concept is on hold. CD is a lead-in to the E-proms. Where I now have a CD player with 60 or so CDs, with E-prom technology, I would have 60 or so E-prom chips and instead of loading and unloading everytime, I would just hit a button to play my selection. That's the way I think the market is going to go. I can just feel it and feel comfortable with it because I'll be able to get the programming I want.

GENE: But one thing, Tony, that you better watch out for is that technology in this industry is changing so much that no one really knows where it is going. I think it will get better and better whatever they come out with. But in the meantime you have to make a decision about what you are going with until something better comes along. You are just spiting yourself if you don't go with anything, just counting on something better to appear. That's why we went with Rowe, we think its the best thing

out right now. This may be brutal, but if CDs blow up tomorrow, I still have a jukebox I can use 45s in. I've been wrong before and maybe the dedicated CD jukebox is the greatest thing to come along, but I just don't feel comfortable with it right now.

Have you made any changes in your jukebox business because of the excessive license fee, which is up to $63 this year?

TONY: Every year we have taken boxes off our route as the rates went up. Maybe I hadn't made a hard decision to take one off; I paid them their $25, I paid them their $50, but I get to a point where I make the decision to take it off the route rather than pay more.

GENE: ASCAP is actually cutting down the locations you can afford to put music into. Basically, ASCAP is going to do to this industry what they have done in Europe, they will have the license fee so high very few operators will be able to afford to have a box out. The other thing that really bothers me about the license fee is that every time we buy a record we are already paying a built-in royalty, seven and a half cents per side. Now we are paying twice. It's also not being enforced. If you pay a dollar and Gene Urso doesn't pay, they just charge you $2 and forget about Gene Urso. It's the ones that comply that are being penalized. ASCAP has accelerated past what it was supposed to do and no one has stopped them. Operators have an apathy that is almost impossible to counteract. It's always easier to let the guy down the street do the work like a group from AMOA is doing without much help. Operators did their part by paying the license fee but ASCAP is not living up to its part of the bargain by having some sort of enforcement. The money ASCAP gets from us is just a drop in the bucket. I think it was the principal of the thing because they thought that jukebox operators were a part of the entertainment industry not paying its just dues. I disagree with that. And the bad part about it is that I could never go to court with them because they would blow me right out of the water. So all they have to do is get a couple of cases and that will scare a lot of operators.

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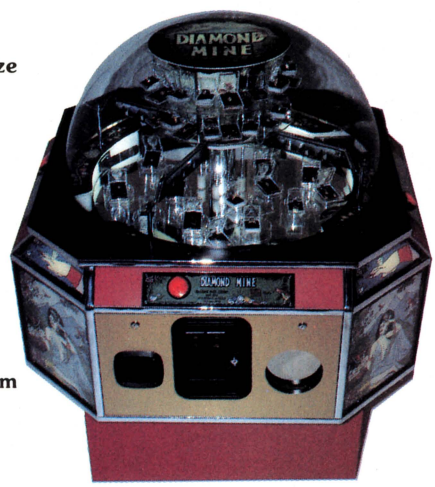

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Hollywood Cranes also introduced new economy models *Lucky Texan*, *Best Choice* and *Inter Space* for customers who want a Hollywood model without a great deal of flash. Hollywood 's *Monster Crane*, *Casablanca*, *Fun Shop* and *Original Hollywood Crane* were there as well.

Central Distributing, national distributor for Smart Industries, demonstrated the *Clean Sweep* cranes that come in single, super single, double, triple and giant single, plus the four player rotary *Diamond Mine* with dual coin mechanism and a three tier merchandise display platform.

Grayhound Electronics featured its *Skill Crane*, *Jumbo Skill Crane* and countertop units. Roth Novelty displayed its *Diga Mart* and *Miracle Hat* pusher.

Showcase demonstrated the single, double and cocktail model cranes in its line that offers baffles and rotating platforms for good prize viewing, mixing and accessibility. Showcase is under contract to Betson for the manufacture of the two-player *Crown Jewels* skill merchandiser that Betson will distribute in the U.S.

Altec Manufacturing showed *Ye Olde Gift Shoppe* single crane, a solid state electronic unit that plays 12 different musical tunes. It has hand-laminated formica cabinet, adjustable timer and dual coin mechanism.

Amusement Games Technology introduced the *Winner Crane* with stainless steel claw and welded steel cabinet. Other features include steel money box with locking arrangement standard as well as dual coin mech. The unit operates on an A.C. motor, has tempered glass viewing area and credit accumulator.

Wedges/Ledges showed *Comer*, a conveyor merchandiser with the ability to self-stock merchandise. It has a dual direction mirrored belt, clutch drive mechanism and two coin slots. Dimensions are 49 inches high by 25 inches wide by 32 inches deep.

Dynasoft, maker of the *Big Top* single upright introduced its crane conversion kit that includes all cradle and claw mechanisms to retrofit most standard crane cabinets, PC board, sound board,

Left to right at the Dynasoft booth: Caren Shantz, Sandra Cantrell, Bill Shantz and Phil Wiley.

There were always players by Betson's *The Prize is Right*.

Rod Gantres, right, of Oriental Trading, greets Steve Thomas, left, and Gene Cramm of Pizza Time Theatre.

Emily Simpson and Ron Yaffe, left, are proud of the Showcase line of cranes. Right are Brenda and Gary Knoflick.

Stewart Heller of Global Imports with the company's *Gold Digger* and *Skill Crane*.

Ron Clapper, left, and Mike Hubacek, right, of Hollywood Cranes talk with Edward Charters of Advanced Amusement in Pittsburgh.

harnesses and joystick plus digital display board for time and credits. The *Big Top* was on view, a model that talks to customers, plays music and features coin counter and plush counter, plus two coin acceptors.

Game Masters showed its *Spin Out*, first seen at AMOA and *Spin Out II*. Among the features are four-player action, flashing winner light, tilt alarm, dual coin mechs, percentage adjustments and complete nudge control. Player stations are color coded. An added feature is a spare circuit board in the card cage.

UAI New Jersey has added to its line with the new *Surprise* pie-shaped crane that features a cuddly talking teddy bear as an attract mode. The units can be used as corner units or butted up to each other for a full circle of eye-catching cranes. UAI's line includes *Treasure Island Gifts Lucky Crane*, plus single, double and triple model uprights.

The Global Imports' booth included the *Gold Digger* and *Skill Crane*. *Gold Digger* is available with a joystick, audio enhanced playing and visualized numerical display of credits. It also has flashing marquee header, double coin mech, coin-in meter, operator adjustable claw and multi-coin accumulator.

R.H. Belam Company showed the new *Belita* double crane with woodgrain cabinet. All American Amusement displayed a mini-crane.

Char-Dee Electronics introduced its *Sand Crab*, available as complete game or kit for those who want to build their own units. The kit comes completely wired and tested with all diagrams and instructions; the customer provides the cabinet and coin door. Complete games and kits have a one year warranty on electronic and mechanical parts.

New approaches to plush, still the highest demand item for stocking cranes, were seen at ACME; everything from satin ice cream cones to letters of the alphabet in foam rubber. Here's a sample of what you can find:

Ace Novelty's catalog offers tubby tabby cats, satin hearts (and ice cream cones), sport balls, plush lifesavers and

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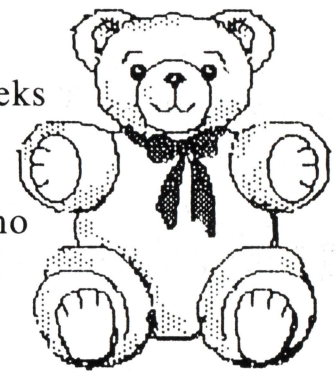

1. You do not have to spend great amounts of money on bulk purchases that will take you many weeks or months to recover.

2. The guess work and counting of your plush is no longer a problem (metered payouts are never right).

3. Concerns about new mixes and varied product.

We can mix a package to suit your requirements. Our standard mixes offer an item count of 180 pieces with average item prices ranging from $ .60 to $ .90. If you need a package mixed just for your needs, please give us a call or stop by at our new location.

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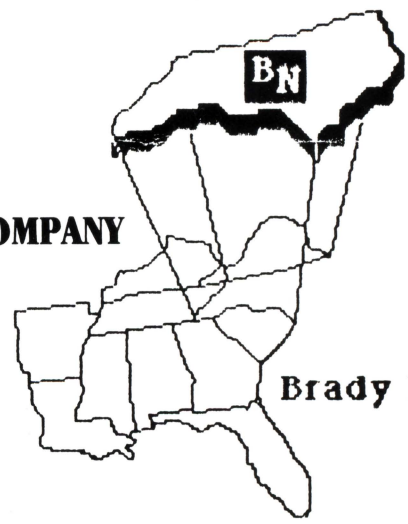

rainbow feet in addition to larger prizes for trading up and jewelry for rotary merchandisers.

Dan Brechner & Company introduced plush animal heads, boxing gloves, baseballs and mitts, baby booties and a family of boy and girl turtles. Digital watches and children's novelty watches are included in Brechner's inventory along with mad balls, dolls, jewelry, hand puppets and more.

UAI New Jersey, which recently obtained the rights to the original E.T. vinyl and plush dolls, had them on display. The large plush E.T. is a good trade-up item and measures 16 inches high, seven inches wide and six and one-half inches deep. The vinyl doll measures eight inches high, four inches wide and three inches deep.

B & C Toys, a subsidiary of Grayhound Electronics, supplies a constantly changing variety of prizes and pre-packs suitable for all cranes. Char-Dee Electronics has also entered the crane supply field and offers a line of stuffed animals from unicorns to donkeys and parrots to deers.

Merchandise International features a wide selection of bears from the classic teddy to country cubs and jelly bears to bedtime bears; also fluffy cats and shaggy dogs.

Prizes! introduced a number of new plush items, including big foot, birdragon, chomper, lulu bird, googles, pretty pooch and flying toot. The company also has large trade-up prizes of famous cartoon characters and the alphabet foam letters that encourage players to return often and spell out their names in foam.

Oriental Trading Company has jewelry and novelty items in addition to plush. Select from wind-up toys, mad ball key chains, waterguns, sun visors, plastic snakes and battery-operated light-up yo-yo's.

Rosette Stuffed Toys has the funny, furry lucky monster, penguins sporting sunglasses, cool caterpillars, dinosaurs, dragons and satin-tipped swans, among other items.

Superior Toy and Novelty features a whole family of various size bears in beach attire. Other new prizes include

Spin Out **by Game Masters interests all age levels.**

Jim Birdsall, left, and Mitchell Kaufman of Amusement Games Technology show off the *Winner Crane*.

Gathering at the Rosette booth are, left to right: Jack Corr of JV Games in Butte, Montana; Phil Steinberg of Rosette; Jack Cole of Wrinkle Zone Vending in Ft. Worth, Texas and Hal Steinberg.

flamingos, a tuxedo-clad fox, dinosaurs and unusually colored monkeys, koalas and elephants.

Etone has velour bird and dinosaur assortments, soft footballs, baseballs, beach balls and basketballs, plus a polar bear with satin heart and silver executive bear.

Marvel Trading Corp. features finger puppets, flags, mini football helmets and other small prizes as well as soft bunnies, lions, frogs, clown faces and clip-ons. Flocked toys, inflatables and seasonal merchandise are also in the Marvel catalog.

Nancy Sales had satin assortments of animals, hearts and kites; also plush stars, fish, penguins, kittens, ducks and more.

Nadel & Sons displayed animal assortments that included turtles, whales, lions, bears and mice plus the popular fuzzy hearts and dice.

In order to keep customers satisfied, suppliers of crane merchandise constantly change inventories, introduce new items and look for variations on formerly successful themes. Check with suppliers often to keep up with the latest.

Neal Rosenberg clowns around with a "friend" at the Betson booth. Will the real Neal Rosenberg please step forward?

Lane Fleisher of Altec Mfg. displayed the single upright crane, ***Ye Old Gift Shoppe***.

Stanley Katz, left, and Anthony Geraci at the Marvel Trading booth.

Jim McVey, right, and Tom Portale of Prizes! displayed new plush prizes and old favorites like the Tasmanian Devil.

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News Release

Arachnid Prevails in Lawsuit

Arachnid, Inc. prevailed once again in the third phase of it's litigation against **Industrial Design Electronic Associates, Inc.** On April 17, a federal court jury in Chicago found I.D.E.A. and Donald and Bonita DeVale liable for **$2,000,000** in damages resulting from their infringement of Arachnid's dart game patent which had been decided in 1985 by another jury. Arachnid had asked for $1,991,315.

I.D.E.A.'s Assets were bought in December 1986 by the Valley Co., a division of Kidde Recreational Products, Inc. Arachnid also brought suit against both Kidde and I.D.E.A. for the ownership of I.D.E.A.'s dual microcomputer dart game patent which Kidde bought with the other I.D.E.A. assets. The jury found that the dual microcomputer invention was conceived by I.D.E.A. while it was working for Arachnid in 1980-1981. Under the 1980 contract between I.D.E.A. and Arachnid, the rights to all inventions conceived by I.D.E.A. during the contract belong to Arachnid. The U.S. patent now will be assigned to Arachnid. A further hearing will be held to determine if other patents, including foreign patents, involving this invention also should be assigned to Arachnid.

The jury also found that Kidde should pay Arachnid $50,000 to compensate it for Kidde/Valley's use of the invention which the jury found should have belonged to Arachnid. This verdict could place in jeopardy any distributors' past use of I.D.E.A. games or designs which incorporate I.D.E.A.'s dual microcomputer.

The Alternative Solution

For the next ninety (90) days, Arachnid is offering to license any operator and/or distributor that has an I.D.E.A. double microProcessor, for the sum of $166.00 per game.

In order to license your game(s) Arachnid requires the following:

A check in the amount of $166.00 per game, mailed to: Arachnid, Inc., P.O. Box 2901, Rockford, IL, 61132-2901, Attn. Licensing Dept.

Serial number of game(s)

Date of purchase

Whom purchased from

Company applying for license

Name and address of owner

If you do not choose to license your double microprocessor, infringing dart head game(s), Arachnid will allow a $175.00 trade in on a Super 6 from an authorized Arachnid distributor or $100 trade in on a 4500 series dart game. The infringing game must be as-is complete and returned to Arachnid, Inc. by the distributor. (Offer good from May 1, 1987 thru July 1, 1987 only)

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An operator picks the best at ACME

Bill Johnston, an operator in Buffalo, New York, scrutinized product introduced at ACME and shares his list of favorites with *Play Meter* readers.

Street picks (kits):

Kyros, a vertical action/adventure kit licensed and sold by a group of California operators who formed a new company, World Games (1-800/542-GAME). This kit logs in as a best buy for its reasonable price, sold direct to operators only. The company also has a bargain-priced ***Mission 660*** by Taito. I ordered a ***Kyros*** at the show, then discovered I had won a game at the prize drawing. Double luck!

Bionic Commandos by Capcom, a horizontal game like a ***Roc 'n Rope*** with a gun...good action.

Rastan Saga by Taito, a horizontal action/adventure...Rygar's cousin.

Sky Shark by Romstar/Taito, a vertical ***1942 Deluxe.***

Bone Crusher (Knuckle Joe) by Hokkaido (1-800/722-3499), a horizontal action game.

Street pick if it was a kit like it is in Japan: Namco/Atari's ***Rolling Thunder***...realistic elevator action but without the elevator.

For high traffic areas only:

Joke Phone by Russell Laboratories (303-841-8019).

For bars only:

Match 'em Up (X-chip) by Merit Industries...naughty, but the gals stand in line to play this one.

Arcade only:

Darius, a dedicated Taito triple monitor action space shoot-em-up; wide body horizontal.

Arcade, golf course, mall pick:

Delo Company's ***Vitalizer***...like its earlier predecessor, the ***Relax-A-Lator***, deposit a coin and the platform vibrates...a refreshing leg massage for 25 cents...not a barnburner but should earn steady forever (805-685-3946).

All locations:

Road Blasters by Atari, a drive and shoot the bad guys in System I kit, dedicated, or sitdown cockpit style.

Other tips:

Control Marketing (312-593-6130) has a new pushbutton and a new Ikari-style joystick. Sharp Image (818-767-8855) has reasonably priced Korean monitors and special financing available on Nintendo's ***Play Choice 10.*** Monroe has another bargain in ***Star Force*** kits, a great ***Galaga*** follow-up for the route.

And a final note, with all the discussion on condom vending machines, have operators considered vending condoms through cigarette machines?

Mark Turk, right, and Sam Franklin of World Games at the prize drawing for a *Kyros* kit. The winner was none other than an already satisfied customer, Bill Johnston.

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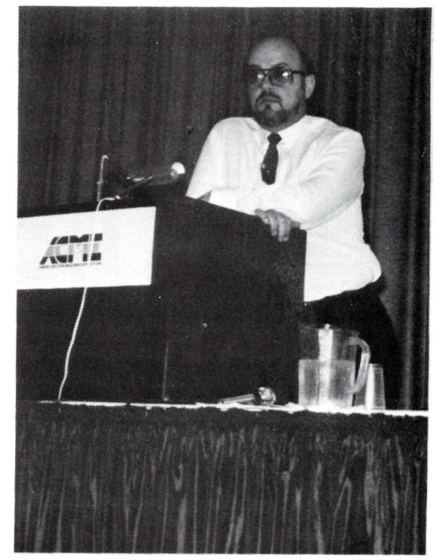
Seminars cover varied topics



Bill Cravens

Todd Erickson of Summit Amusement, "Maximizing Profits from Pinballs".

Firing line sessions on video and pinball plus other free seminars topped the list of educational options at this year's ACME. Whether vending, pay telephones, contracts, computers, standardization or tax considerations concerned attendees, answers were to be found on all these topics and more.

Knowledgeable moderators included Bill Nemgar of Salmon River Amusements, who discussed increasing profits through leagues; John Batistic of Cleveland Coin, who gave insights on good game conversion techniques; Rich Babich of Babich & Associates/Colorado Game Exchange, who discussed evaluating business and planning for future growth; and Mark Whittaker of Bally's Aladdin's Castle, who hosted the free session on how promotional activities can boost your bottom line.

A total of seven free sessions were offered, three technical and 10 others for a well-rounded selection. Plans will begin shortly on next year's topics. Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich, seminar coordinator,said, "Each year we scrutinize the evaluation sheets submitted by seminar attendees to access what operator needs are. If operators have any suggestions or criticisms, I would welcome a call or a letter. We want to offer a program that operators have helped in."

Jeff Rosenthal, left, of M&J Tax Service and Howard Levine of Roberts & Holland confer following the tax and accounting seminar.

David Powell, left, of D.P. Amusement in Antioch, Tenn. and Bob Mathey, Jr. of American Distributors in Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Okla. talk about contracts with Frank Seninsky.

After his vending seminar, Frank Gumma, Jr., right, of American Vending Sales chats with Rick Dworsky of Best Vendors Co. in Minneapolis.

For those that know Bill O'Donnell, the banquet held during the ACME show in New Orleans was hailed a success. Louis Boasberg of New Orleans Novelty Co. has been a friend of the O'Donnell's for many years and was persuaded to write a personal story on the real Bill. I enjoyed reading it, and feel I know Bill and his wife a little better because of it.

--Valerie Cognevich

Inside look at Bill O'Donnell

by Louis Boasberg

The editor of Play Meter magazine asked me to do just a little more on the life and times of Bill. So here goes! There is no doubt that the recent ACME Show generated a great deal of interest in Bill O'Donnell. To the hundreds of friends, family, and former employees of Bally it was no mystery as to why such adulation was shown toward Bill. But to those who do not know Bill O'Donnell, it must be quite a mystery as to the cause of all of this excitement, sentiment, accolade, and genuine love that was shown and bestowed on one ordinary human being. Just who is Bill O'Donnell? Is he Saint, Guru, Mystic, Faith Healer, Prophet, Medicine Man, Minister, Rabbi, or Priest? Bill may be one or all of these things, who knows.

There are some that believe Bill O'Donnell was born in a manger and attended by three wise men. This may not be true, but on the other hand, we have to believe that Bill was canonized after his martyrdom caused by the New Jersey Gaming Casino Board.

I first saw and met Bill O'Donnell many years ago. It was not too long after the war and New Orleans Novelty Company had just been made a Bally distributor. Insomuch as we were a small distributor, which is only a grade above an ordinary insignificant operator, when we first visited Bally in Chicago. we were not allowed to look upon the divinity or even kiss the ring of founding father Ray Maloney.

Therefore, on our first visit to Bally after acquiring the distributorship we were escorted into the office of George Jenkins, the reigning sales manager at the time. As I walked into Jenkins' office, I noticed a handsome curley-headed young man working diligently with a mop and a broom. I said to George, "I like the way that young man handles that mop and broom and I think he will go far in this company!" How far, we did not know at the time! However, I might add it wasn't too many months before the young curley-headed man was sitting at Jenkins' desk and Jenkins was using the mop and broom, not as well as Bill, but George had to make a living. But I am getting ahead of my story.

Bill O'Donnell's duties, in addition to doing janitorial work, was entertaining small distributors. The very night I met Bill, we were invited to his apartment on the southside of Chicago before going out on the town. So my wife Babs and I took a cab to go south, and was it cold. This was during my Martini period, like Picasso had his blue and yellow periods. I always remembered segments of my life by what I was drinking at the time. Anyway, on the way, I said to my wife, "I sure hope they serve Martinis as I am dying for one and it will warm me up." So we get to Bill's and after climbing about five or six flights of stairs, we finally reach his apartment.

We were greeted by Bill and his young wife Nicky who I later nicknamed "Nick the Greek" (I always give nicknames to those I love). On the floor of the apartment were three little children, Cathy, Ann, and Billy, the youngest, all dressed up in diapers. After a few minutes of small talk, I asked where

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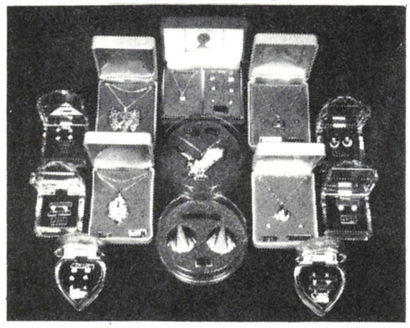

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the Powder Room was, Nicky said, "We don't have a Powder Room, but we do have a John!" I went to the John and washed my hands, but there was no hot water and believe me the water from the facet was freezing. I came out and told Bill and Nicky that their hot water was not running. Nicky said, "We don't have hot water; this is a cold water flat." But then she made me happy by saying, "Let me get you some refreshments." I thought to myself that I hoped Nicky knew how to mix a fair Martini. But there were no Martinis on the way. I must admit, though, that she mixed a great batch of Kool-Aid; I think it was the same flavor they served the prisoners in the German concentration camps!

Well, the baby sitter had finally arrived so we left in Bill's Maxwell for the Loop. We went to a movie and although the movie was not too good it was at least warm inside. After the movie, we did not go to the Chez Paree or any other nightclub. We went to Walgreen's and had Bran Flakes and cream. It was a healthy midnight supper, if not luxurious. So, this was an account of my first meeting and my first social engagement with the O'Donnells.

I will skip over several years of hard work by Bill until he became, not only the sales manager, but he had also achieved the rank of second in command to the great Maloney himself of the entire organization. Which only shows what hard work, dedication, and conniving will do for an ambitious young man.

If you read the book or saw the movie, "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," this was not about Bill O'Donnell because he really tried to succeed and he did. So I am going to skip over a few more years of successful achievement by our hero to a period when he was at the pinnacle of success. Once again we visited Chicago, not as operators or small distributors, but as one of Bally's large distributors.

So naturally, being close friends of the family, we merited an invitation to son Billy's wedding. The night before the wedding there was a large dinner party at the O'Donnell's beautiful home in Wilmette. This house was about the size of Buckingham Palace (and had hot water). My wife and I were picked up at our hotel in a limousine with a chauffeur and on the way I said to her, "I sure hope they have champagne." I was now drinking champagne, instead of Martinis, as this was my champagne period. When we got to the O'Donnell mansion, I can say it was a far cry from the cold water flat on the south side to the luxurious mansion on the north side. It only proves that whoever said "Go west young man," was wrong.

After shaking hands with the elite of coin-machine society, we thought it was time for a glass of champagne--if they had any. One of the waiters came up and said, "what is your pleasure?" I said we would like to have two glasses of champagne. He said, "do you prefer imported or domestic?" I said imported. He said, "would you like Sec, Demi-Sec, or Brut"? I said Brut. Which would you prefer, " Dom Perignon, Cliquot, Mumms, Bollinger, Taittinger, or Moet Chandon?"

Believe me I was overwhelmed! I started to say, "what, no Kool-Aid?" But I thought better of it and told the waiter to make his own choice because before the night was over I am sure I would have a glass of each brand.

I mention all of this just to show how far O'Donnell had progressed in a few years. But going from the ridiculous to the sublime, and really getting serious, if there ever was a person in the world that deserved success and a person whom success never changed, that person was Bill O'Connell. He was always the same sweet, charming human being whether he was the janitor at Bally or the chairman of the board.

Many people who do not know Bill will wonder why such a wonderful, kind, loving person was forced to resign from his position at Bally by the New Jersey Casino Control Commission. I can only answer this simply by saying that Christ was crucified; Mahatma Gandi, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, were all shot; and Joan of Arc was burned at the stake. So Bill O'Donnell was shot down by some little men in New Jersey who did not know their subject or their person very well.

I could go on and mention several other periods in the life of Bill O'Donnell and base them on the Tom Swift books, like "Bill O'Donnell and His Solid-State Flipper Game," "Bill O'Donnell and His Super Electronic Slot Machine," "Bill O'Donnell and His Aladdin's Castles," and last but not least, "Bill O'Donnell and His Park Place Hotel." But I won't go into all of this as it would take up too much time, too many words and too much space.

I will close this ludicrous but tragic account of O'Donnell by repeating an article this writer wrote a few years ago, which has appeared many times, but should reappear many times in the future:

"Some there are who believe in waiting until a chap passes to "the undiscover'd country from whose journ no traveler returns" ere they give expression to "inner integrity."

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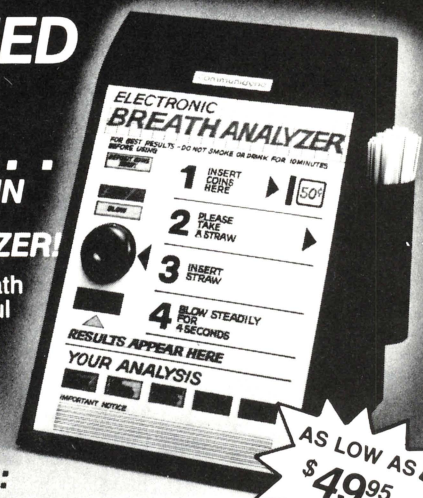

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During all my years in the coin machine business, I have met, done business with, and have been exposed to some truly great men, and I can in all sincerity and without hesitation say that the greatest of all, in my opinion, is William T. O'Donnell, Sr., known throughout the coin machine world as Bill.

Bill has just enough transgressions and worldly weaknesses to make him a real human being like the rest of us. Yet, he has all the spiritual values such as love for his fellow man, kindness, gentleness, faith, generosity, understanding, patience, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, and everything else that reflects the true teachings and philosophy of the Sermon on the Mount.

I do not believe I am alone in my opinion of Bill O'Donnell. I believe that if you would ask the majority of employees at Bally, friends, partners, business associates, and everyone that has known him any length of time, they would say to a man they do not like Bill, they love him.

Even those that are not close to Bill all know about his many philanthropic deeds never carried on his coat sleeve, but which would fill an ordinary book, a living example of "we only keep that which we give."

Laugh if you will, but I compare O'Donnell with such men as Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandi, and Jesus himself simply because all of these men in their striving to do good for their fellow men faced intense adversity and many slings and arrows throughout their lives.

O'Donnell has played a leading role in the rise and fall and the rise again of the Bally empire. But unlike Rome, the Bally empire, under the guidance of O'Donnell, achieved greater success than ever before. But in order for Bally to achieve the pinnacle of success, O'Donnell has had to suffer and wear not once but many times a crown of thorns. ▒

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HIGH TECH TAG ON A SPACE AGE PLAYGROUND

Remember the movie *The Last Starfighter*? The main character was a video game fanatic who used every spare quarter playing his favorite shoot 'em video game. When at last he reached the ultimate score on the machine, he was whisked away to a far away planet to become one of that planet's warriors. He donned chest armor and grabbed his laser gun and became a real-life starfighter. No more was he confined to manipulating a joystick or envisioning enemies on a screen. He had, in effect, become a character off the screen and a part of the game.

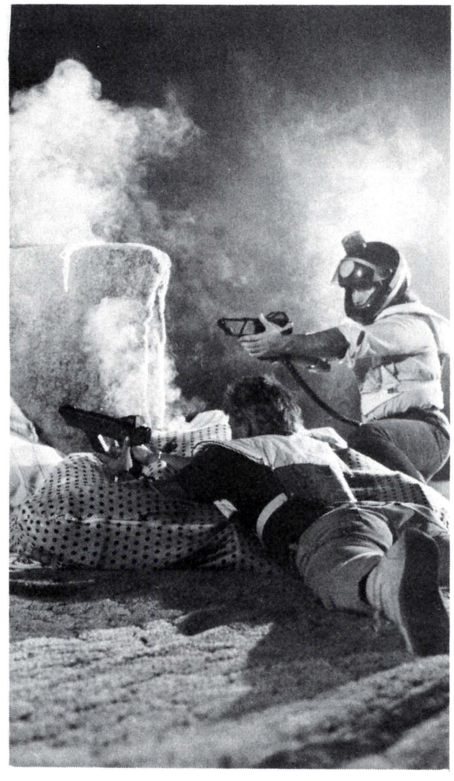
Fantasy, you say. Maybe so, but now players can become the "last starfighter" in the new game sensation, *Blaster Tag*. Players are equipped with helmet shield sensors, laser guns, and computer packs. Imagination is provided by the player as he bounces across a padded floor, shooting at enemies, dodging boulders, and escaping enemy fire. The first *Blaster Tag* Arena transformed an ordinary building into a cushioned planet's surface. There are special effects including smoke, strobes, blacklights, and 40 moon boulders that glow in the blacklight. The object is to score points by firing and hitting other players in one of the sensors. The blaster guns shoot a visible red or green beam of light so the player can see where his shot lands. Scores are tallied by computer. Each player wears a four-pound pack that is connected to his gun. Hits are recorded when the light bounces off the reflective triangular scoring surface on the front and back of the target vests and back to the plastic gun.

Developer, Dr. David Peretz, said the concept is similar to Photon, but *Blaster Tag* can be purchased in any variation so almost any operator can afford it for almost any size space. Peretz calls the human video games "the wave of the future."

Peretz and seven partners opened the first *Blaster Tag* Arena in Hialeah, Fla. which takes up 10,000 square feet. However, Peretz said that it can be adapted to much smaller spaces. Players pay a $10 membership fee and then $3 per six minutes of play. On preview night, at the end of last year, over 200 warriors battled it out on the two-inch foam floor studded with "rocks." Peretz told a local Hialeah newspaper, "We can't project how long it will last but we hope to turn it from a fad to an enduring sport by promoting team and league play."

Peretz said he will sell the entire unit as a franchise or separate units so the operator can be creative. For more information call (305)891-2250 or (305)981-4500. ▩

They may look like innocent girls but they compete with the guys and oftentimes win.



The special effects add to the overall excitement.

A starfighter seeks out the enemy with his laser gun.

Sunshine & games at FAVA

Orlando seems to be *the* place to hold the FAVA show as evidenced by the sizable crowd at the April 24th event.

After a slight setback with exhibitors being unable to finish setting up on time, crowds browsed at 40 exhibitor's displays.

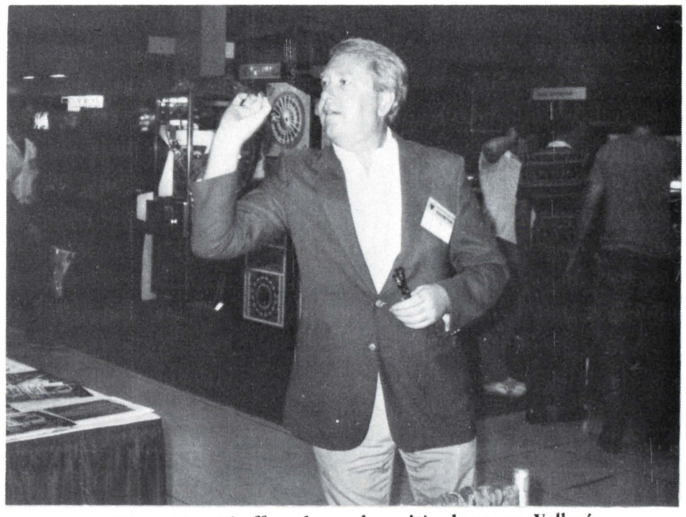
Florida's rather fickle distributor network saw some new and old names vying for position. Birmingham Vending, an established, long time, distributorship in Alabama opened a new office in Florida and is carrying most of its lines in the state; Status Games, a manufacturer that has given the industry well-known poker and trivia games, is now establishing itself as a Florida distributor headed up by Ralph Paulkner; Belam Southeast is perhaps the most recognizable, having been solidly in Florida many years, buying up others such as Monroe and Rowe under the leadership of Bob Haim; Buccaneer Video Sales, under Curtis and Helen Sarver is fast becoming a distributing force having been a operating company for several years and just before the show adding two new lines; Sunn Amusement Distributing with Bill Medvetz is also added to the distributing list; A & G Distributing, affiliated with Grayhound, is in the Florida area under the guidance of Gary Canetti and Agnes Ricci; and Eagle Distributing's president Jerry Kaye announced its plunge into the Florida market.

Why the unsettled distributor situation in Florida? "The manufacturers just don't take it seriously," one distributor speculated. "I

Marisa Kane of Kane Amusement stops for this shot with Jerry Reeves, center, of Wurlitzer, and Carmen Ricci of Grayhound.

Len Smikin, right, and Ted Furkin, center, of The Silent Partner, explain computer software to operator Doug Sernka of Player's Music Co.

Mark Rasnow, right, of Dan Brechner talks with "one of Dan Brechner's finest customers" David and Angela Bisagna of KWB Innovative.



Valley's Alan Shaffer shows how it's done on Valley's electronic dart game.

The Belam guys, Richard Gershmann, left, Bob Haim, second from left, and Frank Dichazi, right, show the latest equipment to Fred and Pegg Stab of STS Music and Games.

FAVA welcomed AMOA president Dick Hawkins and his wife Patti.

think this is the only state where you see every distributor handling every line. Look around, the same equipment is in every booth!" he added.

Another distributor added that he thought the only distributors that would be successful in the state were those that had big routes. "A distributor that is also a large operator can take games in volume. The manufacturer doesn't particularly care if the games are sold to other operators or put on the distributor's route--the manufacturer is getting his money one way or the other."

But whatever the distributors felt about the situation, it was clear that operators were taking advantage of the situation at FAVA by going from one to the other with tales of better deals from the other distributor on the same game. "We're all under one roof," one distributor said. "Operators are coming over here and negotiating a deal and then going to the next one for a better offer."

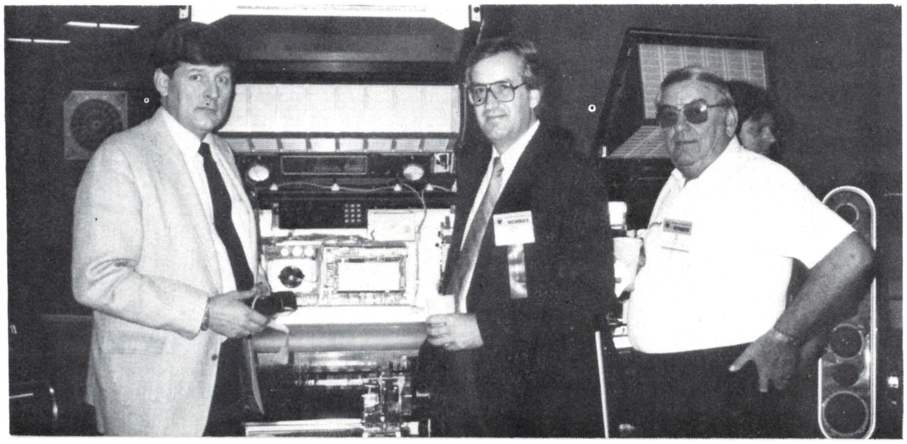
Although most of the equipment had been seen at the American Coin Machine Expo in New Orleans in March, there were several new pieces shown. Premier showed its new *Spring Break* with an obvious theme. Scantily clad models lured operators over where they could play the game. With the Premier-tradition of a photograph backglass, the game looked like a Premier game. "It's OK," said one operator, "but nothing that special."

Capcom had a prototype of a game coming soon called *Bionic Commandos*. Capcom's *Avengers* was a super game and hopefully this will follow that tradition.

A company called Iceman showed a unique hockey game of the same name that it is hoping to license to a manufacturer. The game, demonstrated by air-table-hockey champ Mark Robbins, has the player hitting a puck on a table-top playfield with real hockey sticks. Robbins stressed that it was simply a prototype with possible improvements scheduled.

A seminar on cranes helped operators understand not only the legal aspects but operating the machines. Ron Yaffe of Showcase Inc. told operators that the number one consideration in purchasing a crane should be quality. "Savings are eaten up by downtime if it is not a quality piece," Yaffe told the audience. "Construction is important. Buying a crane is like buying a boat, you must look at the hull not the flash. Mistakes can be hidden with glitz. You should consider the manufacturer also. Will it be around next year? Is it a reliable company? Do you

TRADEWEST
AVAILABLE
KIT
Sunn
Bill
Acceptor
DO YOURSELF
FIVA
Stop At



Russ Strahan, left, of NSM points out the advantages of NSM's latest model to Rick Johnson, center, and Ed Bortz of All Brands Vending Co.

Buccaneer's Curtis Sarver, left, and Williams' Marty Glazman look like they are enjoying themselves with Christine.

Nichibutsu's Ko Adachi poses with new game *Ninja Emaki* and Status' Mike Yaffa.

Fred Kelly, left, of Southeast Distributing Co. checks out dart supplies from Paul Horg of Dartworld.

think you will get the service back-up?"

Steve Piantieri, a crane operator, added his suggestions, "Allow yourself two weeks leadtime for plush shipments; pack plush properly; buy by the case, it's usually cheaper; make sure the equipment can't be tipped over (cement blocks in base may be necessary); and be aware of any problems with stock (the string attaching two dice may get hung up on the claw).

Mark Rasnow of Dan Brechner Company advised crane operators that a crane is like a retail store. "The key is the flash. You must have something that people want," he said. "If the customer sees the same merchandise week after week they won't be excited about it."

He cautioned operators that if collections are down, it could be the crane needs a change. And finally he said it is better to have too much inventory than too little and it is important to know locations and areas in which the cranes are located.

Bob Rhinehart, FAVA's executive director, summed up the question of legality by saying, "If the dog's asleep, don't kick it." He went on to explain that FAVA has had an unofficial statement from the Department of Alcohol that they don't consider cranes *illegal.* But that the department will be available for discussion if something comes up.

Gary Grouse of Birmingham Vending, right, puts finishing touches on booth as Atari's Jim Newlander and Mike Taylor look on.

NEWS

AMOA board reviews parallel import problems

A lengthy discussion concerning the effect of the parallel import problem on AMOA members was held during AMOA's recent board of directors mid-year meeting.

At its last mid-year meeting, AMOA prepared a counterfeit boards and parallel imports position paper that was distributed to the trade.

At the 1987 mid-year meeting the board reviewed this position. A meeting was held between AMOA officers and various manufacturers in early March at which time the problem was jointly discussed.

Complex and unsettled questions surround the legal rights and liabilities of owners, importers, and users of genuine goods which are subject to copyrights or bear U.S. trademarks and are imported to the United States without the consent of the U.S. copyright or trademark owner. Such goods are commonly known as "parallel imports." This subject involves provisions of the U.S. Copyright and Trademark Laws, the Tariff Act of 1930, and the Semiconductor Chip Protection Act of 1984, which have been reviewed by the board.

Court interpretations of the various statutes involved are far from uniform and it is unclear in what circumstances, if any, a purchaser of parallel imports will be found to be an infringer. The entire subject of parallel imports is likely to be the subject of legislation in the 100th Congress.

Parallel imports arise because contractual arrangements manufacturers have with licensees are not being complied with. The board believes that if manufacturers do not approve of parallel imports they should focus attention on parties who have breached contractual arrangements with manufacturers and not attempt to place the burden on persons who have purchased them in good faith. This was previously reviewed with various manufacturers in March, and was confirmed by the full AMOA board. AMOA strongly supports the position that manufacturers should meet the situation head-on with foreign suppliers who are creating these problems.

At the time of the mid-year meeting, no legislation had been introduced, although there were reports that it will be forthcoming.

Merit signs agreement with Dial A Deal

Merit Industries Inc., the North American games company, has signed a provisional deal for the Leeds based company, Dial A Deal, to sell its video games in the U.K.

Merit was without a distributor after the collapse of its agreement with Barcrest.

The first game to come into the U.K. under the deal is the *Match 'em Up* intelligence-reaction game. This is undoubtedly a superb, addictive video game and a preview of what is to come.

Maury Ferchen, left, and David Weaver, right, of AAMA join presidential press secretary Jim Brady for lunch at the White House. The conversation was light, and the AAMA team learned that, alas, there are no amusement machines in the White House. Brady, who is well known for his intellect and humor, continues to improve physically.

Merit Industries is said to be highly disappointed that the deal with Barcrest did not get beyond the first game and are keen to cooperate with British concerns to ensure its continued presence in the U.K.

Bally sells six-flags

On April 21, Bally announced it had an agreement to sell its Six Flags amusement park chain to Wesray Capital Corp. for $350 million. Under the agreement, $250 million will be used to pay off existing Six Flag debts.

Ironically, another amusement game manufacturer, Sega, recently bought the Time Out Family Amusement chain of arcades.

Chip problem will not affect video games

"It is no larger than a few grains of rice, but it was big enough to cause one of the most serious episodes between the U.S. and Japan since the end of World War II," began an article in Time Magazine, talking about the microchip, a sophisticated bit of silicon that is the heart of the electronic age.

Back in the early 80s, both the U.S. and Japan semiconductor manufacturers vastly increased their microchip production ability assuming the demand would rise. But instead of the increase in demand, there came a slump that drove down the price of the 256K chip from $40 to as little as $2. The U.S. accused Japan of dumping (selling for less than it costs to make it) the chips at less than fair market value. Japan and the U.S. entered into an agreement whereby Japan would not sell at below fair market prices set by the U.S.

However, no sooner had the agreement been made than U.S. manufacturers cried foul and accused the Japanese of continuing their dumping of chips. Convinced that violations of the agreement were real through intensive investigations, President Reagan announced certain sanctions would be made against Japan in an effort to protect American microchip manufacturers. The plan was to impose a tariff on certain goods coming into the U.S. from Japan. A list was drawn up of over $2 billion worth of goods but that was whittled down to a mere $300 million. This number is equivalent to what the U.S. felt was lost sales.

The American Amusement Machine Association executive director David Weaver said that the tariffs will not affect video games. "The tariffs were imposed on goods for which there are lots of other sources," he said. "If video games would have been included, it would have hurt the U.S. manufacturers and eventually the players, not Japan." The final list of products to be tariffed includes certain automatic data processing units, a certain class of tools, and limited selections of color TV receivers."

Weaver had obtained a copy of the list of proposed categories for tariff as soon as it was available and sent it to AAMA members. He also contacted the U.S. Commerce Department and the U.S. Trade Representative's office to express the feelings of game manufacturers.

Crackdown on illegal use of cranes

The New Jersey Amusement Association has been concerned over the spread of unlicensed cranes in the state, and is pressing for aggressive enforcement against those using cranes illegally.

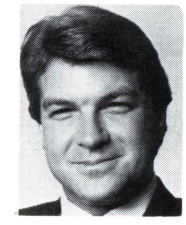
In New Jersey cranes are considered gambling devices and are allowed only in limited specific locations and are licensed by the Bureau of Amusement Games Control. Even joysticks and gumball dispensers do not change the fact that the outcome is not predictable, thus a gambling device. "When a crane is operated at an illegal location, there are no inspections to ensure compliance with the law," said association president Pete Barnes. "This puts legitimate licensees at a competitive disadvantage." Legitimate licensees pay $250 per year, per location and are subject to restrictions and reporting requirements and are limited to what they can charge to play.

NJAA is pressing for prosecution of locations, forfeiture of machines, and forfeiture of liquor and lottery licenses, when appropriate. The association is also looking to license manufacturers and distributors to prevent the sale of cranes for use in unlicensed locations. NJAA is working with the Attorney General's office, Bureau of Amusement Games Control, the Lottery Commission, and local prosecutors.

Members of NJAA are asked to assist in the endeavor.

Bally names Backer, Locke, and Branson

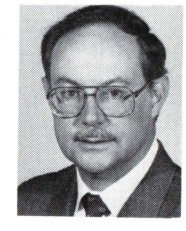
Jolly Backer and Tom Locke were recently named to head up national sales efforts for the coin-operated amusement product lines of Bally Midway Manufacturing Company in Franklin Park, Ill., and Bally Sente Inc. in Sunnyvale, Calif. Backer will oversee the sales and distribution activities in the western half of the United States and all of Canada, while Locke will function in that same capacity for the eastern half of the country.



Jolly Backer

Tom Locke

Each will implement marketing programs, effect market research and sales analyses activities, and foster customer relations within their areas. They intend to strengthen Bally's participation in



Gene Branson

distributor and state association shows and sales events, and regional trade shows and meetings.

Both have been serving in key sales positions where, according to Steve Blattspieler, vice president of sales, "... each has displayed sound leadership and management capabilities." Backer joined Bally in 1986 as Sente's director of national sales. Before that he held sales management positions with two other manufacturers--Sega USA and Data East USA.

Locke was most recently vice president of sales development for Midway--a position in which he sought out related products for contract manufacturing purposes. His successes included two coin-operated products currently in development at Midway. He also developed national account customers for Sente--negotiating sales agreements with large, high volume, nationwide chains. Before joining Bally, Locke held merchandising and sales positions with Montgomery Ward & Company.

In addition, Gene Branson has been named manager of materials for Bally Midway/Sente. Branson's experience and skills in the areas of purchasing, materials handling, inventory control, and cost containment will be valuable in developing a comprehensive material supply system from the raw material supplier through the manufacturing assembly process. He was previously with Motorola Corporation.

Cinematronics appoints Dodd

Cinematronics, recently purchased by Tradewest, is concentrating its efforts on production and manufacturing, attempting to update and improve these functions with an emphasis on quality control which, in the past, has been a vulnerable area. Towards this end, Cinematronics has recently employed one of the finest production managers available, David Dodd.

Dodd brings with him experience and credentials that include director of production for the defunct Sega/Gremlin company which at one time produced as many as 500 dedicated games per day. "We are all very happy to welcome Dave on board and look forward to his leadership in this very important position," said executive vice president John Rowe.

Dodd joins the management team of Leland Cook, chairman of the board; Jim Pierce, president; John Rowe, executive vice president; Ken Anderson, vice president of sales and marketing; and Cary Mathis, vice president of finance. Combined, this group represents more than 60 years experience in the coin machine business, which includes operating, distributing, and manufacturing.

10 Hesch scholarships awarded

The Amusement & Music Operators Association board of directors approved the awarding of 10 $1,000 Wayne Hesch Memorial Scholarships for 1987-88.

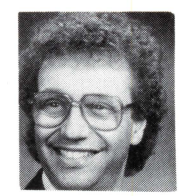
The fund's coffer was greatly enhanced with recent fundraising activities. For the past two years, a $1,000 scholarship has been awarded to a single individual. However, a series of innovative fundraising activities conducted in 1986--including an Expo '88 product raffle, plus several other benefits and donations--raised nearly $75,000 for the fund.

Wayne Hesch Scholarship recipients for 1987-88 are: Dawn Wellinger, Milwaukee, sponsored by Milwaukee Amusement, Milwaukee; John Dollar, Trenton, Tenn., sponsored by Southern Games, Brentwood, Tenn.; Susan Grill, Hillsborough, N.C., sponsored by Dart Amusement, Buffalo, N.Y.; Lynnette Pantelopoulos, Broomfield, Colo., sponsored by Alpha Distributing, Broomfield; William Allen, Randleman, N.C., sponsored by Matthews Music, Jamestown, N.C.; Vincent Castro, Alhambra, Calif., sponsored by Tecmo, Inc., Carson, Calif.; Joseph Uraco III, Wheeling, W.Va., sponsored by Dobkin Brothers, Wheeling; Skylar Sudderth, Austin, Texas, sponsored by TAVS, Inc., Bryan, Texas; Mara Graven, Greene, Iowa, sponsored by Red Line Vending, Charles City, Iowa; and Steve Light, Flint, Mich., sponsored by Eddie's Amusement, Flint.

AMOA president Richard Hawkins will present each recipient with his or her scholarship at upcoming state association meetings where the recipient resides or attends school. AMOA is also asking the state association to attempt to match AMOA's scholarship contribution to the state winner.

Administered by the AMOA Education Foundation, the scholarship is in memory of Wayne E. Hesch, AMOA's 1979-80 president. Awarded on a non-discriminatory basis to young people in need of financial assistance while attending an institution of higher learning, applications are considered from interested persons including employees of AMOA members and their children, members and children of AMOA members. All applicants are given the same consideration based on financial need, scholastic ability, demonstrated leadership ability, demonstrated interest in pursuing an educational program compatible with the objectives of AMOA, and demonstrated interest in the business community.

LaForce joins Johnston Products



Mel LaForce

Melvin W. LaForce was recently appointed director of marketing for Johnston Products Company, East Moline, Ill. LaForce spent the last six years as marketing director of Kiddie Rides USA and Global Imports, Davenport, Iowa.

Bud Johnston, president of Johnston Products, said, "We're excited about having a person of Mel's caliber and experience overseeing our marketing program, especially since we have some new plans for updating our current

coin-op equipment, introducing new equipment, and tapping new markets."

Johnston Products Company purchased Chicago's J.F. Frantz Company and continues to market its line of authentic shooting gun games and counter-top games. Recently, Johnston Products added the *Big Top* gumball vendor to its upright gun games and is active in the bulk vending and amusement operator markets.

"We're primed and ready to move forward," explains Johnston, "and with Mel's marketing ability, we're on the verge of a great new era. The real success of our product line is the long life on location giving operators and locations results which pay year after year."

NAMA discusses standards for debit card systems

The National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA), preceding its March Western Convention in Reno, held extensive discussions about the need for establishing uniform standards for using debit card systems in vending machines.

Some 30 representatives of vending machine manufacturers, producers of coin mechanisms and card systems and of NAMA attended the first meeting, said NAMA president G. Richard Schreiber who served as moderator.

A discussion by technical experts from the group followed in Chicago on April 2 and a third meeting is scheduled May 19 in Chicago.

Preliminary talks concerned power source requirements, interface connections and language protocols, with interest also focusing on the placement and function of different pay systems working simultaneously in the same machine.

"Vending operators are more likely to look with favor on the opportunities which lie in card systems if the new devices, working along or in conjunction with coin mechanisms and bill validators in each machine, are interchangeable and compatible," said Schreiber.

He continued, "The purpose of these meetings is to find out what the problems are, whether uniformity can be achieved, and how to go about it within the existing technical requirements and in conformity with government regulations on industry standards."

He said the first two meetings resulted in better understanding of technical aspects and of individual requirements and viewpoints. "If all continues to go well, we should have the guidelines established for our members and the industry when we get to Philadelphia for the NAMA Convention in October," he said.

Rowe releases Beta Hi-Fi

Rowe recently released a new Beta Hi-Fi for its video jukebox. Rowe has been testing the new system and had originally planned on introducing it with its R-92 model phonograph. However, Rowe noted that the results of the sound and picture quality has been so phenomenal that Rowe decided to introduce it immediately instead of waiting.

Ottowa, Ohio divisional pool league championship winners in the men's division I were, left to right: Ralph Grennay, Al Tennyson, Frank Bischoff, Larry Long (captain), Larry Behrens, Larry Burroughs, and Don Willitzer. Women's division I winners were, left to right: Robin Brown, Karen Long, Nancy Shipman (captain), Mary Trent, Deanna Lange, and Judy Lymanstall (missing from photo).

Chilton Vending in Wichita, Kansas, has been testing the hi-fi jukebox for several months and Randy Chilton had this to say: "I always felt the sound quality was the biggest drawback to the non-hi-fi tape decks used on the Rowe video jukebox. The new hi-fi deck sounds absolutely fantastic. With the popularity of the CD increasing, I think customers will not only appreciate the excellent audio quality but rather expect it. The video jukebox with the hi-fi tape decks sounds just as good as the compact disc jukeboxes that have been recently introduced."

Rowe's Joel Friedman said, "Rowe has always been a strong proponent for the operator to supply both audio and video in their jukebox business. We believe that combining the 160 record selections with the hi-fi video selections is going to be tremendous for the cashbox and will be recognized immediately as an important part of the future of the jukebox industry."

Boards seized

U.S. Customs agents in Los Angeles seized 20 counterfeit *Arkanoids* on March 16 that had been shipped from Beon Woo Electronics, Seoul, Korea, and were en route to Miami.

Robert Fay, director of industry affairs and enforcement for AAMA, praised the U.S. Customs Service for its decisive action and noted that AAMA would be working closely with the service in the future.

Indictments handed down

In another legal action, Gary Kraayenbrink and his sons Henry and Galen were indicted on nine counts by a federal grand jury; five counts of felony trademark infringement and four counts of misdemeanor copyright infringement.

If found guilty the three could be sentenced to a maximum of 29 years in prison.

Alberta Shuffleboards reorganizes

Alberta Shuffleboards (Edm) Ltd. of Edmonton, Alberta, a 23-year old distributor and operating company, was acquired by a new firm to be known as Alberta Shuffleboards (1986) Ltd. The management team of the new company is headed by Igor Vernik and Victor Linetsky.

In 1981 Vernik founded a software development and consulting company that is currently distributing its products throughout North America and the United Kingdom. The company is specializing in development and distribution of Point-Of-Sale systems for retail and wholesale industries. Vernik has also been a business consultant for several major businesses. Vernik will be serving as president and chief executive officer of Alberta Shuffleboards (1986) Ltd.

In 1982, Linetsky established and successfully operated an import/export company making frequent trips abroad to research new products for Canadian market and negotiate with manufacturers. Linetsky will be vice president in charge of marketing, promotion, and sales.

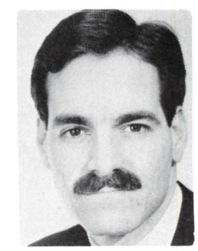
The company will continue to be a distributor for such well known lines as Bally, Midway, Sente, Rock-Ola, Dynamo, Sega, and Data East as well as adding several new lines.

In anticipation of continuous growth within the industry, the company doubled its manpower and will be moving to new facilities in May of this year. The new Alberta Shuffleboards premises will have a large well equipped showroom for merchandise display, new completely stocked parts department with the capacity to serve all of Western Canada. A national toll free (800) number is anticipated to be in place at the time of relocation to the new facility.

Philip Morris USA promotes three

Philip Morris USA has announced three promotions in sales and marketing: Barbara A. Reuter named assistant to the vice president of sales; Arthur Raporte, Jr. named assistant to the executive vice president of marketing; and Gregory Tarring named manager of sales support.

Barbara Reuter



Arthur Raporte

Reuter joined Philip Morris Inc. in 1976 as manager of corporate support and was later promoted to manager of consumer affairs and corporate support programs. She transferred to Seven-Up International in 1983 where she was director of planning and franchise administration. In 1985 she joined Philip Morris USA as manager of Virginia Slims promotions and in 1986 was appointed group manager of marketing and promotions; then director of marketing promotions.

Raporte joined the company in 1982 as a planning analyst for Philip Morris International and two years later was appointed senior planning analyst.

Gregory Tarring

Tarring joined the company in 1977 as manager of fleet operations. Prior to that he worked for CPC International, Inc., New Jersey Bell, and Fort Lee Trust Company.

Mississippi state show planned

In Mississippi news, the second annual Mississippi Trade Show and Banquet is scheduled for June 19 and 20 at the Ramada Inn Coliseum in Jackson. Jan Green--last year's chairman as well as this year's--said that last year's banquet drew more than 100 people, a good indication, she said, of how much traffic the trade show itself had. All the major manufacturers were represented, she said, and the response was excellent. This year's may turn out to be one not to miss.

Green said that many of last year's exhibitors are already finalizing plans to attend. She also added that a timely line-up of seminars are planned.

For additional information, call (601)371-1000.

Dillon joins Bally; Walker to Data East

Joe Dillon, who left Williams only days before ACME in New Orleans in late March, has joined Bally as its vice president of pinball. He began the newly created job on Monday, May 4. He will work in all aspects of pinball.

Jeff Walker, who spent a year and a half at Premier, was named to the position of director of sales and marketing and international vice president of sales and marketing for Data East Pinball. Walker said he studied the product and the direction of the company and decided "this is the place I want to be." Data East showed its first pinball effort, *Laser War* at ACME. Walker said the final version will be shown in mid-June and plans are to begin shipping soon after. Data East plans to open its manufacturing plant in Melrose Park, Ill. this month. Walker will also be involved in Data East's video game division though his emphasis will be on pinball.

Birmingham Vending opens in Florida

Al Toranto has announced the official opening of the Florida Division of Birmingham Vending Company. The new office is located at 6121 Anno Avenue in Orlando.

Birmingham Vending is now stocking the new warehouse with full-line vending and amusement equipment. Sales representatives Becky Bowman, Charles Caplan, Tim Paukner, and Felix Whatley are covering the state of Florida from the new division office. The Florida telephone number is 305/857-7393.

The vending lines in Florida include Rowe, Coffee Mat, Litton, Mars, Coinco, and Very Fine. The amusement lines are Rowe AMI, Valley, Dynamo, Bally, Bally Sente, Sega, Atari, Data East, Romstar, Memetron, Merit, Capcom, Cinematronics, Taito, Sun, Tradewest, Konami, Betson *Big Choice* Cranes, and Arachnid.

New office of the Florida division of Birmingham Vending Co.

Tim Paukner, right, Florida sales rep. with Stan Seymour, president of Seymour Music, Sarasota.

Maine approves COCOTs

According to the April edition of *Pay Phone News*, the Public Utilities Commission of Maine has adopted the rules and regulations of Chapter 25 that permit installation and operation of private pay phones, both coin and credit card, to provide local and toll service.

As of early March no COCOTs were being operated yet due to time requirements for the application process. Several applications have been filed and tariffs remain to be approved.

Rule 25 lists general guidelines for all COCOTs and specific requirements for public and semi-public locations. Some of the requirements are that all COCOTs:

1. Shall provide instrument-implemented service and be connected to the telephone network through a tariffed public access line.

2. Shall be required either: (a) to register under Part 68 of the Rules and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, or (b) to connect to the network through an FCC-registered coupler.

3. Shall be hearing aid compatible.

4. Shall provide emergency access to the operator and 911 service (where available), free of charge and without use of a coin or credit card.

5. Shall provide coin return for uncompleted calls.

6. Shall accept coins of various denominations.

7. Shall provide notice of whether the instrument is capable of receiving incoming calls.

8. Shall be connected to the network under a tariff-stipulated one-party uncapped COCOT public access line measured service rate if measured service is available in that area. If unavailable, COCOTs may be connected under a tariff-stipulated public access line one-party message rate if available; otherwise, COCOTs may be connected under a tariff-stipulated COCOT public access line flat rate until measured service becomes available.

9. All costs for construction of outside plant necessitated by the introduction of COCOT service shall be borne by the COCOT provider.

10. All COCOTs shall be mounted in accordance with federal and state height and location regulations for use by disabled persons.

For a copy of the complete rules, write the Administrative Director, Public Utilities Commission, 242 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333-0018.

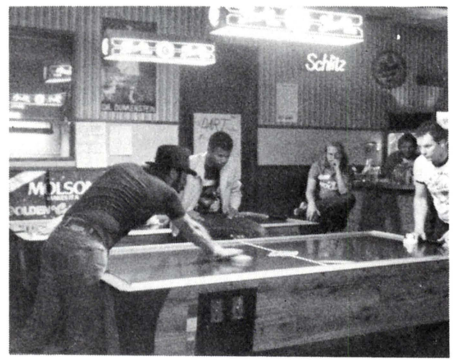
NEWS

Dynamo co-sponsors air hockey championship

Dynamo Corporation, maker of the Dynamo Air Hockey table, and the Scoreboard Sports Bar in Houston were major sponsors of the $5,000 1987 U.S. Air Hockey Championships held April 4-5 at the Scoreboard site.

Additional sponsors included the U.S. Air Table Hockey Association (USAA), Professional Air Table Hockey, KLOL Radio, CR Auto Wholesale, Games People Play and other local businesses. Tournament play took place on six Dynamo tables provided by player/operator Vince Schappell's Professional Air Table Hockey company. Dynamo's table has been fully sanctioned by the USAA.

Robert Hernandez of Houston won his second national title and the top prize. Jesse Douty of Atlanta, a former eight-time national champion, took second place and Phil Arnold of Houston took third. Others placing in the top ten included Mike Schoppe of Houston, fourth; Don Bearden of Houston, fifth; Pete LaBella of Boulder, Colo., sixth; Paul Marshall of Dallas, seventh; Don Metzler of Houston, eighth; Mike Nelson of Houston, ninth; and Albert Ortiz of Houston, tenth.



Robert Hernandez, left, and Jesse Douty compete in Dynamo's air hockey finals.

left to right: Lorraine Morrison, Jesse Douty, Robert Hernandez, Patrice Nale and Phil Arnold.

The Pro B division was won by Patrice Nale of Houston, who placed 17th overall, followed by Ace Nichols of Boulder. The expert division was won by Roy Ferguson of Houston and amateur honors went to Anton Mawhood of Houston.

Nale also captured the women's division title for the third consecutive time. Second place was won by Lorraine Morrison of Boulder.

The USAA group in Houston produced a tournament program of articles and pictures for the event. For copies of the program and information on tournaments and upcoming promotional activities, contact Mark Robbins at Dynamo, 1-800/527-6054 or (817) 589-7699. The next Dynamo-USAA national tournament will be in September in Colorado.

Pay phone conference set for June

The pay phone that has been taken for granted for so long can now be legally owned by the location owner instead of Ma Bell.

The market response for owning pay telephones has created an event titled Payphone Annual Conference & Exposition, or PACE '87, scheduled June 23-25 at the Stouffer Waverly Hotel in Atlanta.

Organizers of the show say several thousand small business owners and giant corporations will attend in hopes of realizing higher profits from their pay phones. Topics to be discussed at the conference include selecting the proper equipment, potential profits, additional revenue from long distance, and advertising on phone booths.

For more information on PACE '87, call 1-800/227-1234. In Illinois, call (312) 986-1432.

WAMOA board plans Pacific Expo

The board of directors of the Washington Amusement and Music Operators Association (WAMOA) is planning the second annual Pacific Northwest Exposition of Music and Games June 19-21 at the Red Line in Bellevue, Wash. It will also be the occasion of the second annual Washington State Dart Tournament.

Members of the board of directors, other members and guests (a total of 34), recently traveled to Jamaica, West Indies on a trip arranged by Jim Hart, president of WAMOA, and Karen Hart, secretary. It was not all pleasure, as discussions for the Expo were included. Anyone wishing further information on the Expo can write WAMOA, 1011 Pitcher Street, Yakima, WA 98901, or call (509) 457-5891.

Karen Hart of Yakima Music Co., Barbara Jordan of C&B Music,and Colleen Elkhart of Pearson Music.

Other WAMOA members and spouses enjoyed a trip on the Great River, Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Solk receives award

Bud Solk, president of Bud Solk & Associates, Inc., an advertising/public relations firm with clients in the coin-op amusement industry, has been named Board Member of the Year by the Little City Foundation.

Solk will be honored June 16 at the Little City Annual Dinner at the Guildhall, Ambassador West Hotel in Chicago. It is an annual award presented to the board member who has devoted his time and energy to helping others.

D & R Star hosts 264-team tournament

A record 264 teams participated in the recent D&R/Star 12th annual pool tournament held at the Mayo Civic Arena in Rochester, Minn. In addition to regular events, categories of youth, second chance, and hardluck were included.

The team from Shortstop Saloon in Faribault won the masters division. Pub Bar #5 in Rochester won the men's A division; Eastside Inn #4 in Rochester won the men's B division; and Dressen's Saloon #1 of Red Wing won the men's C division.

Shortstop Saloon in Faribault did it again in the women's B division; and Dooley's #6 of Rochester won women's C division.

In the hardluck category, Ellendale Liquor from West End won for the men and Last Round #2 from East Country won for women. The second chance category was won by North Star Bar #10 for men and Captain's Quarters from Albert Lea for women.

Youth categories were captured by Mickey Rowland of Chatfield, who won the 9-13 year division; Tim Tonjum of Faribault who won the 14-17 year division; and Dave Thompson of Geneva who won the 18-19 year division.

Fred Saack of D&R/Star reports, "We are already thinking ahead to next year for this event. Our goal will be to surpass the number of teams that compete in the national competition in Las Vegas. We need six more teams to do that." He expressed thanks to all those who made the tournament a success. The dates for the 1988 competition are April 8-10 at the Mayo Civic Arena.

Payphone of America appoints three

President and chief executive officer of Payphone of America, B.G. Hauser, announced the appointments of Brad Lawson as vice president of national marketing and sales, Ron Hilton as vice president of technical services, and Joe Sanders as vice president of public relations and advertising.

Payphone of America, based in Clemmons, N.C., markets the Standard Electrica-ITT pay phone in the U.S. The phone does not facilitate long distance coin paid calls or credit card calls, but does accommodate around 90 percent of all pay phone calls made (local, operator assisted, or calling card long distance). The unit is designed for protected environments such as restaurants, shopping malls, airports and, convenience stores.

ICMOA holds English Mark Darts Tournament

Peoria, Ill. was the site of the Illinois Coin Machine Operator's Association (ICMOA) English Mark Darts Tournament that drew 1,325 players April 3-5. Over $11,000 in cash and prizes were awarded at this third annual state dart championship. Co-sponsors of the tournament were Arachnid, Inc. and Anheuser-Busch.

Tom Pace of Rockford, Ill. won the open singles event. Pace is the current world singles champion and will defend his title on Memorial Day weekend in Chicago at the $50,000 English Mark Darts Bullshooter II International Grand Tour. Ted Walker of Peoria took second place and Mike Bell of Springfield took third.

The open doubles event was won by Pace and Wally Meredith of Rockford. Jim Dickison and Dave Schultz, both of Rockford, placed second. Dan Pucillo and Frank Lopez of Chicago placed third.

The top woman shooter was Carol Johnson of Cary, Ill.

ICMOA tournament director Jay Abraham, center, with open doubles winners Tom Pace, left, and Wally Meredith.

who won women's doubles with her partner Colleen Washburn of Chicago. The team of Debra Carr and Chris Peterson of Rockford took second place; Joyce Henning and Dianne Cardiff of Spring Grove placed third.

Mixed doubles champions were Terry Mutton of Peoria and Carol Johnson. Wayne and Judy Roewer of Crystal Lake took second and Craig Stewart and Kathy Smith of Rockford took third.

Arachnid supplied 60 English Mark Darts boards--46 new Super 6 boards and 14 Bud Mark Darts. Arachnid's A team of tournament officials did a professional job of handling the event.

Jay Abraham of Abraham Amusement in Peoria served as this year's ICMOA dart tournament director; Ellen Donovan was tournament coordinator; and David Merik of Rockford Star Games served on the ICMOA dart committee.

Over 1,300 players participated in the ICMOA dart tournament.

A total of 105 qualifying kits were sold to ICMOA members this year. Qualifying tournaments were held over a period of several months leading up to the finals. Anyone interested in initiating a similar statewide tournament program should contact Arachnid, Inc., 1-800/435-8319.

Yokoyama and Ozaki start Tad Corp.

Tadashi Yokoyama and Roy Ozaki, formerly of Data East Corp. in Japan, have started their own import/export company, Tad Corp.

According to Yokoyama and Ozaki, "We are totally committed to the industry and hope to serve by marketing, selling, and licensing amusement products. We will be representing various manufacturers around the globe."

To reach the new company, write: Tad Corp., Mac Kichijoji Court Room 102, 1-28-4 Minami-cho Kichijoji, Musashino-shi, Tokyo, Japan (postal code 180); phone 0422-42-8031; fax 0422-42-8032.

Northern N.Y. pool tourney successful

Over 98 pool players competed for $6,000 in cash and prizes at the Holiday Inn, Lake Placid, New York, for the recent Northern New York Eight Ball Pool Tournament.

The event was sponsored by three New York companies: Upstate Vending Service, Inc. of Lake Placid, Valley Vending Service, Inc. of Plattsburg, and A.S. Hardy Co., Inc. of Malone. Competition took place on Dynamo pool tables.

Winners in the A division were: first place--Harley Mattila, Classic Lounge, Plattsburg; second place--David Gallarneau, Milano's, Peru; third place--Gary Casagrain, Tupper Bowl, Tupper Lake; fourth place--Roy Scrivin, Vinnie's, Fort Covington.

Winners in the B division were: first place--Walt Syzdlowski, Vinnie's, Fort Covington; second place--Ron Fuller, Airport Lounge, Plattsburg; third place--Charley Duffy, Whistle Stop, Rouses Point; fourth place-Paul Pritchard, Malone Bowl, Malone.

MOMA hosts trade show and seminars

The Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements (MOMA) held its 12th Annual Convention and Trade Show February 20-21 at the Sheraton Park Place Hotel in Minneapolis, Minn.

Business management and technical seminars occupied the first day of the convention. Todd Erickson of Summit Amusement in St. Paul conducted a technical seminar on the importance of pinball games. The following day the trade show opened with 18 exhibitors displaying goods and services in 30 booths.

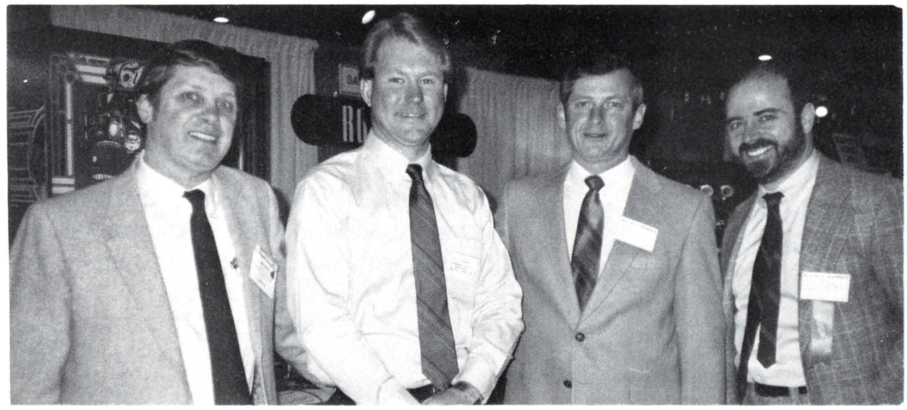
An evening cocktail reception was hosted by Beach Distributing Co., Hanson Distributing Co., and Lieberman Music Co. Over 140 attended the banquet and awards presentations made to outgoing board members and members of the president's club.

Honored guests who addressed the group during the three day event were: Robert Latz, MOMA legislative and legal counsel; Steve Prowler, music and games

editor for *Vending Times*, and Richard Hawkins, president of AMOA .

Officers were elected for the coming year and included Gene Winstead of Twin City Novelty Co., president; Tami Norberg Paulsen of C&N Sales Co., vice president; Ernest Woytassek of Tri-State Music Co., secretary; and Jim Hannegan, treasurer. Elected to the board of directors were Jim Dubow, Todd Erickson, Douglas Smart, and Linda Winstead.

The next general membership event for MOMA is the annual summer outing and seminars set for July 12-14 at the Radisson Resort Arrowwood in Alexandria, Minn.



Gathering at the MOMA show are, left to right: Bob Hesch of Rock-Ola Mfg., R.A. Green, III of No. Myrtle Beach, S.C., Dick Hawkins, president of AMOA, and David Sandler of Sandler Vending Co.

Gene Winstead, left, president of MOMA, joins Tom Copardico of Ace Novelty.

Rich Sweet, left, of Beach Distributing Co. and Rob Dubow of Active Coin Entertainment.

Dick Hawkins, president of AMOA.

Lloyd Williamson, left, of Williamson Music Co. and Joe De Marsico of Amusement Emporium.

Wholesale music outlet opens in Wisconsin

The Mainstream Megastore that opened earlier this year in Milwaukee is also the home of Total Music Service, Inc. which will serve as a wholesale outlet to the jukebox industry.

Mike Mowers, formerly of Radio Doctors & Records, Ltd., is now Mainstream's Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) representative. In addition to being vice president of Mainstream, Mowers serves as the president-general manager of Total Music Service, Inc.

The Mainstream Megastore offers shoppers a warehouse selection of albums, cassettes, compact discs, and videotapes.

Jim Miller joins Play Meter staff

Jim Miller

Jim Miller has joined the Play Meter staff as the advertising account executive. His background in sales comes from his involvement in oil-related jobs since 1974.

Jim has been to several shows including ACME and calls the industry "unique." "I have already met some wonderful people in this industry and am looking forward to working with them on their advertising and meeting them at shows," he said.

Play Meter editor, Valerie Cognevich, commenting on Jim's position, "We feel very lucky to have Jim working with us. It's the oil industry's loss."

Bally Midway completes 'blueprints' for video-tape vendor

Bally Midway Manufacturing Co., which entered into an agreement last January that gave it the exclusive manufacturing rights for the *Mr. Flix* video-tape vending and rental machine, has completed the "basic blueprints for conversion of the working prototype to a manufacturable item," according to Larry Adelman of VKS International, the Chicago firm that holds the patents for the machine. The *Mr. Flix* machine is designed to hold more than 450 tapes and will accept cash or credit cards. It automatically checks the customer's credit, vends the tape, records the rental or sale, and returns the tape to inventory when the customer brings it back.

That last function--returning the tape to inventory--explains in large part why Bally chose VKS International as a partner in the venture. VKS International's method patents for the dispensing of an identified article are, according to Adelman, the first such patents to include the return of an article to inventory. That fact, Adelman says, virtually assures Bally of an uninterrupted path to the manufacture and sale of the machines.

Bill Pelafas, of Bally, says the machines are expected to be in production by late fall or early winter. VKS International will sell or lease the machines to locations and will offer complete turnkey services.

Western regional winners Leo Cinelli and Kris Wasserman with Richard Scherer and Tom Umphreys of Oakland Cigarette, a tournament sponsor.

Final bullshooter regional draws good crowd

The fifth and final regional, held March 14 and 15 in Buffalo, N.Y., moved Arachnid's $50,000 English Mark Darts BullShooter II National Grand Tour a step closer to its culmination in Chicago. A total of 329 players turned out for the four main events, including marksmen like Bob Wiles, of Ferris Music's Coors-Waterville, Me., dart league. Wiles won the Open Singles event and shared first place with Roger Plante in the Open Doubles and with Lisa Lambert in the Mixed field. New York's Michelle Marinelli and Michelle Morin took the Women's Doubles event.

The competition followed close on the heels of the Western regional, which was held February 21 and 22 in Sunnyvale, Calif., and which drew 259 contestants. Winners in that regional included Jim Nolan, Tom Iverson, Leo Cinelli, Kris Wasserman, Diana Wall, and Sandy Austin.

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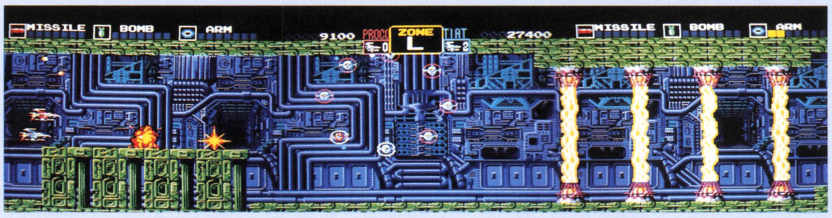

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Atlas promotes Wittler

Jim Wittler has been named vice president and general manager of Atlas Distributors in Pittsburgh. His responsibilities will be to oversee the sales and distribution of Atlas's full line of coin-operated vending, music, and game equipment.

Before his promotion, Wittler was a regional salesman for Atlas' parent company, Eastern Distributors, covering eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware. Before that, he held management-level positions with Servomation and Stouffer Food Service Management.

Medeco gets patent

Medeco has announced that it has received a patent (No. 4,635,455) for its *Biaxial* lock design. Issued January 13 of this year, the patent fully protects the Salem, Va., firm's UL-listed design, which was introduced in 1986. The *Biaxial* design offers restricted levels of key control and its lock cylinder is said to be pick-resistant.

The company is located in Salem, Virginia and can be reached at (703)380-5000.

Pay phone association goes after Bell

The Louisiana Payphone Association is continuing its fight with South Central Bell for a larger share of every quarter that slides down the coin chutes of the 1,300 privately owned pay phones in the state. The association brought its case before Public Service Commissioner George Ackel in March and met with the PSC staff economist in early April.

The controversy centers on the rates Bell charges customer-owned, coin-operated telephone systems, or COCOTS. Under federal and state, COCOTS must pay Bell a tariff for access to the Bell network. Association president Sandy Babin, however, claims that the tariff--which averages 18.5 cents on each 25-cent call--is too high.

Babin, who also heads Lafayette, La.-based Coin-Call Corp., the second largest customer-owned, coin-operated telephone service in the state, explains that the 18.5-cent figure is based on Bell's three-tiered tariff structure. Private pay phone owners in Louisiana pay a basic monthly charge that averages $46.11 per phone, plus a measured service usage charge of either 4 or 6 cents for the first minute and 2 or 4 cents for each additional minute, plus 31 cents for each directory assistance call. The end result, Babin says, is that a phone that makes 1,000 calls in a month earns Bell $185, while it earns the owner $65.

According to Babin, Bell has proposed knocking about $10 off its charges to private pay phone owners, an amount Babin calls a "band-aid." For a company like Coin-Call, he says, earnings of $75 would be about $25-30 short of the break-even point.

The irony of the present situation, Babin says, is that the costs incurred by Louisiana's private pay phone companies "are less than what Bell's are." If Bell is forced to compete, he says, local calls will stay at 25 cents longer. The way things are now, Babin says, "we're as lean and mean as you can get in this business, and we're dying."

Pins move best at Mississippi auction

Pinball machines were the hottest items at a March 28 auction in Jackson, Miss., according to Jan Green, whose Green Coin Machine Distributors sponsored the event. The pins on the auction block included games like

Arachnid's Bernie Powers, left, with Peter Jackson, center, and Stewart Whyte of Hobay Enterprises in Australia, sponsor of a "down under" team that qualified for the BullShooter II International Finals held in Chicago May 23-25.

Millionaire, Road King, High Speed, Strange Science, Pin Bot, Gold Wings, Rock, and *Raven.* Fetching the highest prices, Green said, were a *Millionaire* and a *Pin Bot,* each of which brought close to $2,000, and a *High Speed,* which sold at only about $100 less. Overall, the pins were, in Green's words, the "least depreciated" items that sold that day.

The used cranes--which included a triple crane and three singles--also moved well, Green said. The auction found new homes for approximately 250 pieces, a figure that comprised roughly 30 phonographs, a dozen pool tables, a dozen cocktail tables, and six to eight countertops. The rest, she said, were video games.

The auction is held three times a year--the spring auction is sandwiched in-between a June sale and a September sale--and it draws operators from as far away as Missouri, West Texas, and Florida. Half the machines on the block, Green said, are usually consigned. Her customers usually bring five or six pieces each, she said, and they've come to depend on the sale to get the capital to freshen up their routes.

AAMA goes to the consumer

In an effort to portray the coin-operated amusement industry in a positive light in the eyes of millions of consumers, AAMA has initiated a quarterly newspaper release program. Targeted for 3,800 suburban newspapers nationwide, the program consists of light, but positive, references to the amusement machine industry and its products.

The initial release, entitled "Quick Quiz" was distributed in March to 1,000 daily and 2,800 weekly newspapers nationwide. The goal, according to AAMA Executive Vice President David Weaver is "to provide a flow of information to the consumer about our products that is upbeat and fun."

Anyone interested in further information can write to AAMA, 205 The Strand, Suite 3, Alexandria, VA 22314, or call 703/548-8044.

Merit introduces *Deluxe Trivia Whiz*

Merit Industries' latest edition to its popular *Trivia Whiz* series was unintentionally left out of our Spring Buyer's Guide in April.

We apologize for the oversight and invite our readers to learn more about updating their trivia games and other games with *Deluxe Trivia Whiz, the Fifth Edition,*a one to four-player game available in all cabinet styles. For details, see page 96 of our New Products section in this issue.

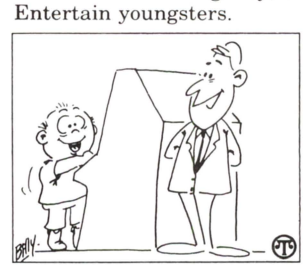
A reproduction of AAMA's Quick Quiz ad.

QUICK QUIZ

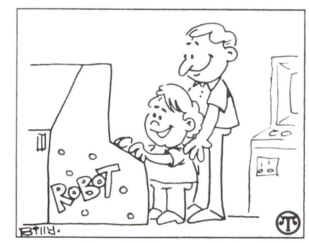
Flashing lights, the thrill of battle and visions of monstrous creatures. That's only partly why one type of popular game is so much fun. Test your knowledge of other electrifying reasons.

1. Parents are glad to know video games can help: A. Develop reflex skills and hand-eye coordination; B. Familiarize children with computers in a non-threatening way; C. Entertain youngsters.

2. Video games give an ego "pay-off". A. True B. False



3. Most games centers are for teenagers only. A. True B. False



4. To society, video games contribute ---- A. A way to stimulate the economy; B. Wholesome amusement for the entire family; C. A way to get away from a younger sibling.

ANSWERS

1. A, B, C. Another plus: video games are a participatory activity, unlike passive TV viewing. 2. A. True. Video games require a certain skill, the games give an ego "pay-off" and children may want to continue playing—as with any game—until they have mastered it. 3. False. Most game center operators try to create a safe environment for children of all ages. 4. B. As with movies, music or any hobby, video games provide wholesome entertainment and introduce people to new technology. A. is also true, and C could be.

Industry mourns loss of Prince and Pentecost

Joseph Prince

Joseph Prince, president of Amusement Machine Exporters, Inc. and vice president of Douglas Vending Company, Inc. in Hollandale, Florida, suffered a fatal heart attack on Saturday, April 18. He was 69. Prince was an industry veteran who developed the nixie tube, a forerunner of the LED read-out.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, he began his career there in 1935 operating pinball machines. He studied electrical engineering at New York University and later worked in research and development for Dumont Manufacturing Company and Ratheon Corporation in New Jersey, during which time he developed the nixie tube and the ultraviolet infrared vacuum tubes used in the Explorer satellite.

Prince relocated to Florida in 1959 and re-entered the coin-op industry with the opening of a new company, Major Enterprises. In 1973 he opened Douglas Vending Company in partnership with his son, Mark. Later, in 1979, he opened Coin Amusement International, a Bally Midway distributor. He was very active as an operator and distributor until one year ago when he semi-retired.

Thomas Tol, president of Thomas Automatics in California, admired Prince for his enormous experience, expertise and especially his desire to help others in the business without regard to personal gain.

"He knew how to operate and what to operate," said Tol. "He knew all the nuances of what kinds of locations and customers suited each type of equipment. If you needed parts or advice on who to contact, Joseph was happy to lend assistance. Often I talked with him at the end of the month and went through the month's activities. I asked for his advice many, many times and he was always right."

Vincent Storino of S&S Amusement Company in Toms River, New Jersey knew Prince for 15 years and remembers him working with his father many years ago. "He was a long time pioneer in the industry," said Storino. "He was a very good street operator and good friend of the family."

Ken Hoffman of Coinco remembers Prince for two qualities in particular. "He never gave up trying something new, and that's what makes this industry work," said Hoffman, "and he always kept an upbeat outlook."

Prince is survived by his wife, Vera, son Mark and daughter-in-law Esther, and daughter Ronnie. Services for Prince where held at Levitt-Weinstein Funeral Home and he was laid to rest at Beth David Memorial Gardens in Hollandale.

He will be sadly missed by his family and all his friends in the industry. Anyone wishing to send a remembrance may direct a donation in his name to the Miami Heart Institute.

John Pentecost

John Pentecost, former engineer with Rowe International and franchisee for Tommy Life Gate Company in Mississippi and Louisiana, died March 23 of congestive heart failure.

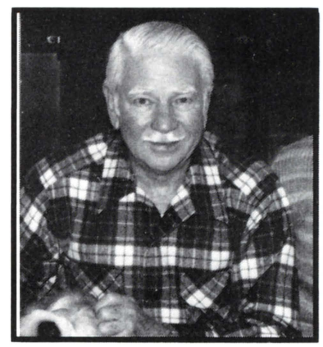
Pentecost was well known in the U.S. and foreign countries since he traveled all over the world when with Rowe International. The semi-retired Pentecost had suffered with heart trouble for four years.

"The man was unique--a friend to everyone," said George Kane of Kane Amusement in Hattiesburg. His likeable personality endeared him to business associates and friends in the industry.

Pentecost is survived by his wife, Maideen, daughter Dorothy Botnick of Dallas, and two grandchildren.

Services for Pentecost were held at the Wright-Ferguson Funeral Home in Jackson and he was laid to rest at Lakewood Cemetery. He will be long remembered and missed by all who knew him.

Joseph Prince with his wife, Vera, on his 69th birthday.



John Pentecost

The Amusement & Music Operators Association strongly believes that continuing education is a key to success for coin-operators in the amusement & music industry. Since 1983, AMOA member

Continuing Education = Succes$!

operators have had the opportunity to utilize continuing education to enhance their business skills through the AMOA-Notre Dame Executive Development Program at Notre Dame's campus in South Bend, Ind.

Designed specifically for operators,

the program is comprised of five (5) two and one-half day sessions. Sessions are held each spring and fall. Conducted by a leading Notre Dame educator who understands the needs of operators and patterned — in part — after Notre Dame's executive MBA program, sessions address these diverse operator topics... and much more:

- Accounting
- Budgeting
- Finance
- Human Resource Management
- Law
- Marketing
- Strategic Planning
- Taxation

There also are group assignments where participating operators are given a specific homework "project" to complete during the session. Better yet, each session gives operators an opportunity to learn in a campus environment *and* exchange ideas with fellow operators — a unique learning experience in itself!

Feedback from operators who have successfully completed all — or just a few — of the five sessions has been nothing short of phenomenal! In fact, all attest that they reap many benefits — monetarily and in business "smarts" — when applying what they've learned back home. Those operators successfully completing all five sessions also receive AMOA-Notre Dame continuing education certification.

The AMOA-Notre Dame Executive Development Program is one very important way that AMOA is helping members improve their business skills through one of the greatest training tools ever — continuing education.

AMOA: Working for You!

For more information on the AMOA-Notre Dame Executive Development Program — or AMOA membership, programs and services — call or write today!

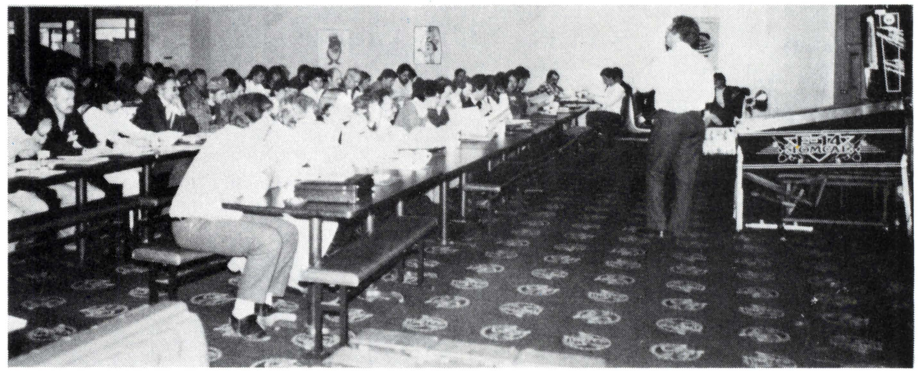
Amusement & Music Operators Association
111 E. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60601
312/644-6610
Direct Line:
312/565-4602

OPEN HOUSES

Open house & service school at New-Way

New-Way Sales, Ontario, hosted a combination open house and pinball school in early April. Over 80 technicians attended a pinball class hosted by Tom Cahill of Williams and Adolf Seitz of Premier; some 200 guests passed through the show. "This was the most successful pinball school and biggest Canadian show ever," New-Way's Jerry and Paul Janda said. Numerous door prizes were donated by manufacturers and won by New-Way's operator/customers.

Over 200 operators tried out the latest equipment.



Some 80 technicians attended a service school. Here Tom Cahill discusses Williams' *F-14 Tomcat.*

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OPEN HOUSES

Betson captures spirit of the season

Billed as an ACME showcase for those operators on the east coast who couldn't make it down to New Orleans, Betson hosted an open house in early April featuring all the latest equipment. An impressive group of industry members were in attendance; more than 300 crowded around the hot new games that had made waves at ACME the week before. Not surprising, Williams' *F-14 Tomcat* and Atari's *RoadBlasters* lead the hit parade; two rooms were filled with a dazzling array of product that lifted spirits regarding the prospects for business in the coming months.

Roger Sharpe, who covered this show for Play Meter said, "For me the festivities were eye-opening and if you have a similar opportunity in your area to attend an event staged by your local distributor--make it a point to go. It's your livelihood at stake and you really owe it to yourself and your industry to support endeavors such as this, because it does bring everyone closer together in an informal and interactive atmosphere."

New Amusement's Rich Vazano, right, accepts congratulations on winning a trip to Puerto Rico from, from left, Williams' Marty Glazman and Betson's Bob Boals, Simon Deith, Joe Cirello, and John Feltz.

Operators lined up to play the latest games.

There was quite a crowd feasting on the sumptuous buffet.

Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants took time out to sample the action.

SNK's Paul Jacob's was all smiles thanks to the success of *Psycho Soldier.*

Merit's David Rubenstein, left, and Konami's Frank Bundra go a little one-on-one with *Double Dribble.*

Marcio Bonilla, left, of Arachnid and Steve Epstein of New York City's Broadway Arcade.

Bally's Steve Blattspieler with Bally's two latest pins, *Hardbody* and *Strange Science.*

OPEN HOUSES

Welcome to Betson/Pacific

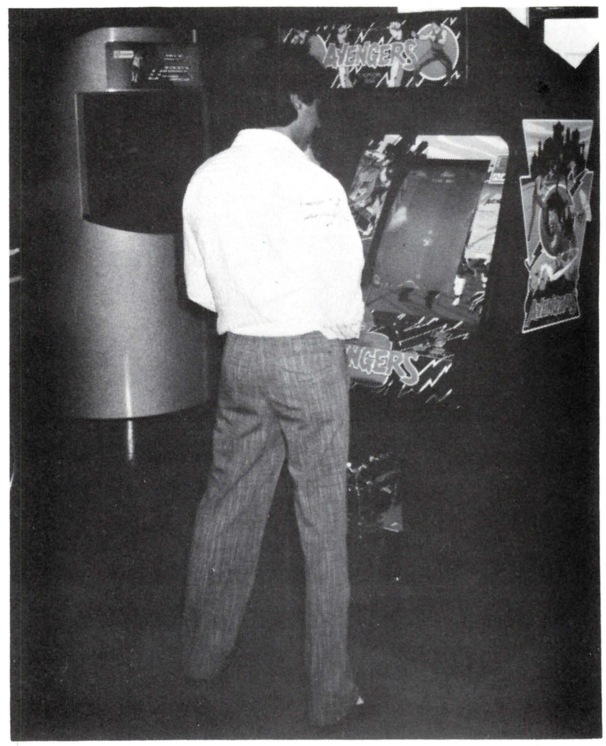
A week after the large turn-out at Betson's New Jersey office, Betson/Pacific in Los Angeles hosted its own crowd. While enjoying a delicious salad bar and munching on hot dogs and potato salad, operators played their favorite games and talked with factory representatives and other operators. Bob Snyder, Bob Snyder and Associates, a consultant for cranes among other things, answered operator questions about the legality of the equipment.

Operators were very optimistic about the industry now and in the future. "The equipment seems to be lasting longer," an operator noted. "There are also some very good games out right now, better than a year ago," another operator observed.

Frank Pellegrini with Konami's latest dedicated game, *Contra*.

"*Psycho Soldier* is doing well," said SNK's Jerry Momoda.

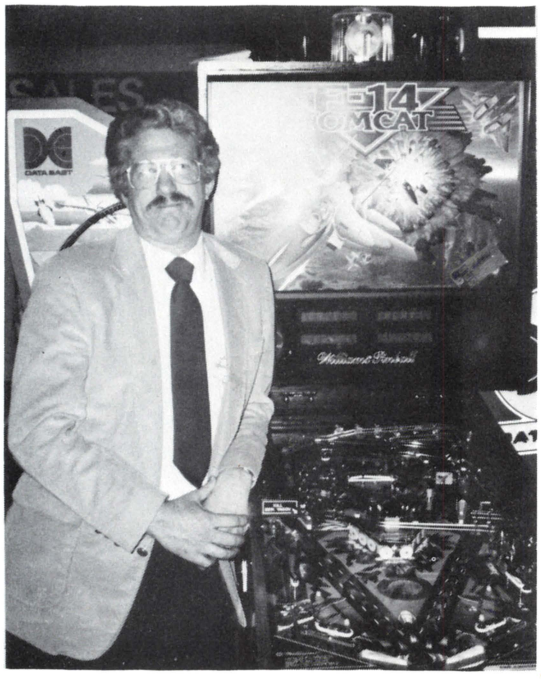
This was taken at the end of the day after many of the manufacturers had already left. However, those here with Betson/Pacific staff include, (bottom row from left) Williams' Tom Cahill, Romstar's Rene Lopez, Konami's Frank Pellegrini, a Capcom representative, (top row from left) Betson/Pacific's Bob Sanchez, Data East's Sue Jarocki, Sega's Lenore Sayers, Betson/Pacific's John Lotz, Romstar's Tim Jackson, SNK's Jerry Momoda, Taito's Rick Rochetti, Romstar's Joyce Kaehler, and Betson/Pacific's Joe Farney and Peter Betti.



Capcom's *Avengers* drew interested players.

An operator enjoys the action of Data East's *Kid Niki.*

From left, SNK's Jerry Momoda, Sega's Tom Petit, and Sue Jarocki of Data East.



Williams' Tom Cahill with hit game, *F-14 Tomcat.*

Good score!, Sega's Lenore Sayers tells *Out Run* players.

You're never too old to stop the ice cream man! From left, Romstar's Rene Lopez, Sega's Lenore Sayers, Mireille Chevalier of Chavalier's International Trading Services, and SNK's Jerry Momoda enjoy a tasty frozen treat.

Women enjoy a good video game as this player demonstrates.

This Romstar group is happy over popularity of *Sky Shark.* From left, Joyce Kaehler, Rene Lopez, Tim Jackson, and Mr. Yasuki.

OPEN HOUSES

C.A. Robinson welcomes guests

It was a gorgeous day and operators took advantage of it to drive over to C.A. Robinson's Los Angeles office for a post-ACME open house. "It's an opportunity for operators who don't get to make it to the show to see the new equipment," noted C.A. Robinson's Sandy Bettelman. There was a vast array of equipment and operators were generally impressed. "I am much more selective about what I buy, but I find I am buying more than I have in the past," an operator explained. "In fact, some of the games I have purchased lately, I wish I would have bought more of."

It was a pleasure talking with Mrs. Bettelman, right, and her mother.

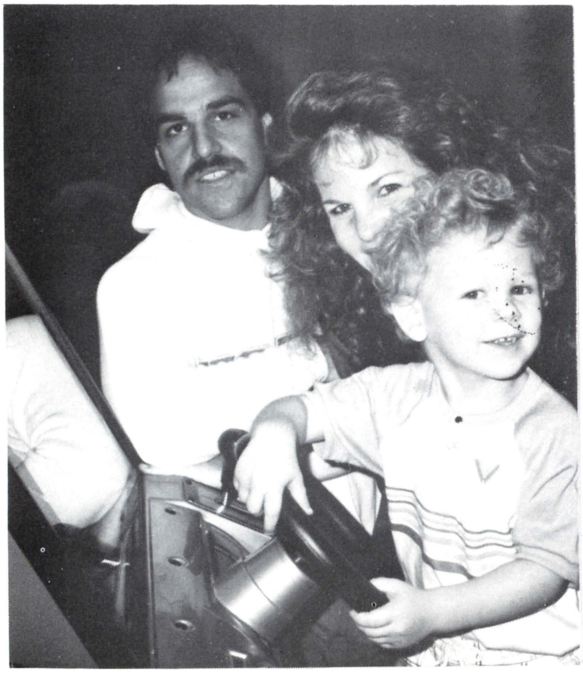
Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich was caught on the wrong end of the camera while chatting with Mrs. B.

The C.A. Robinson family welcomed hundreds of guests. Shown here, from right, Sandy and Adrea Bettelman, Mrs. Leah Bettelman and her mother, and Ira Bettelman.

Guests took a break from playing games to enjoy a lavish buffet.

Guests played all the newest games.

The folks that make the games work at C.A. Robinson.



From right, Sandy Bettelman's son Matt, wife Adrea, and nephew Corey Sanders.

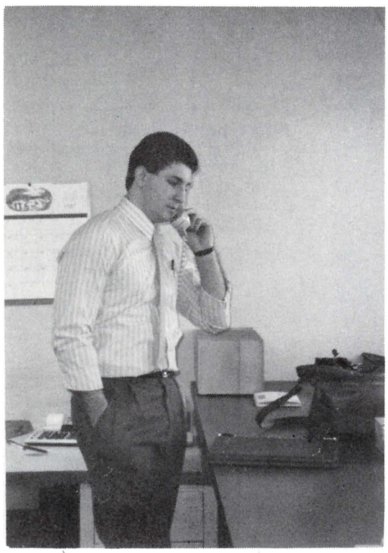
OPEN HOUSES

T.O.P. is tops with operators

T.O.P. Distributing in Rochester, N.Y., invited customers and manufacturers to an open house to celebrate moving into new facilities. Operators were able to familiarize themselves with the new location, talk with factory representatives and other operators, and view new equipment.

The spacious service department at T.O.P.'s new facilities.

Tom Tarantelli shakes hands with an operator from Buffalo.



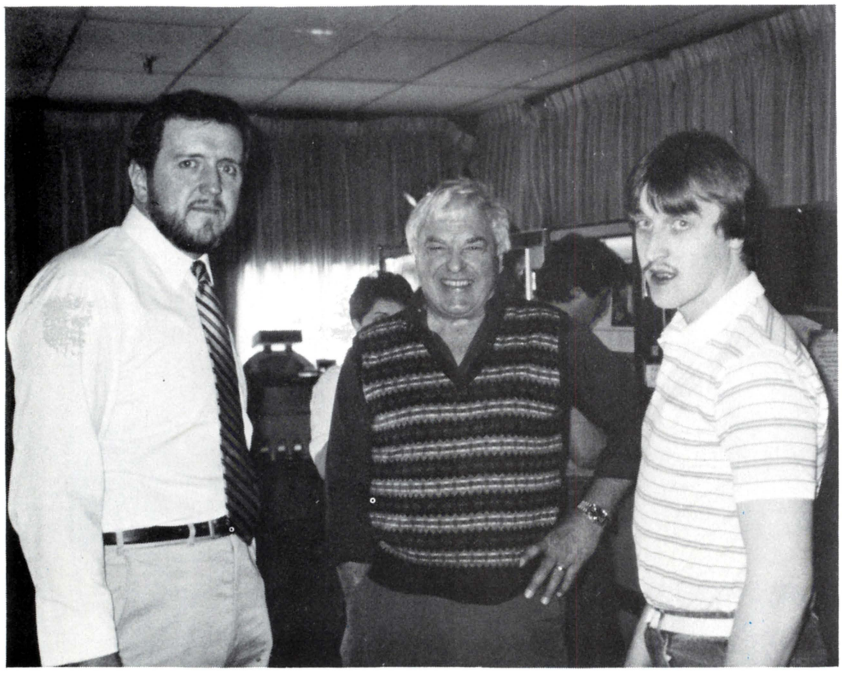
Jeff Tarantelli took time out for a phone call.

From left, Sega's John Hill, Mireille Chevalier, Premier's Jeff Walker (he left Premier soon after this), Nintendo's Joe Gilbert, Tom Tarantelli, Jeff Tarantelli, and Pat Tarantelli.

A shot of the showroom with parts counter before the open house began.

Rowe International's open house

Sega's *Out Run* still draws crowds.



Rowe's Mike Publicover talks with operators Bert and Ron Poulin from Maine.

Operators had plenty of choices of new games to play.

Rowe's Bob LeBlanc, center, welcomes Alouette Amusement's Jerry and Phyllis O'Reilly.

From left, Ross Furman of Skillful Vending, Nintendo's Joe Gilbert, and Arthur Palter of Woburn Vending.

Operator Frank Costas of Fascination, right, with Premier's Jeff Walker.

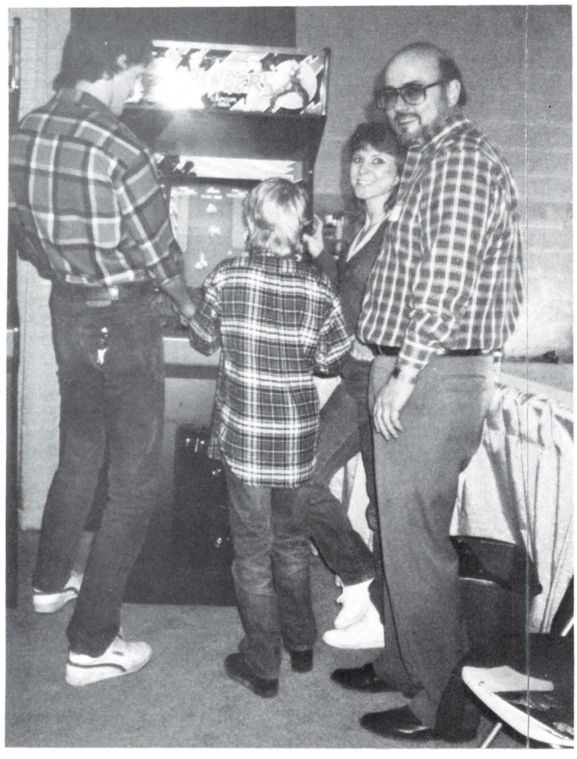
OPEN HOUSES

Sunbelt holds open house

Dave Patterson, less than a year ago, bought the Dallas office of Southwest Distributing from John Gatens, and said he has already, in the first six months, exceeded what he had projected for the entire year. Sunbelt invited operators and manufacturers to celebrate his success and to thank them for helping him reach his goals. Over 150 operators attended what Patterson called a mini tradeshow featuring a service school that morning. Manufacturers showing up to lend their support included NSM's Russ Strahan, Data East's Steve Walton, Tom Cahill of Williams, Jolly Backer and Steve Blattspieler of Bally, Konami's Frank Pellegrini, Capcom's Bill Cravens, Bill Rickett of Dynamo, Atari's Frank Constantino and Mike Taylor, Rick Rochetti of Taito, and Tom Petit of Sega.

From left, Dave Patterson, Atari's Mike Taylor, Philip Oldham, and Frank Constantino of Atari.

Williams' Tom Cahill demonstrates the hit *F-14 Tomcat.*

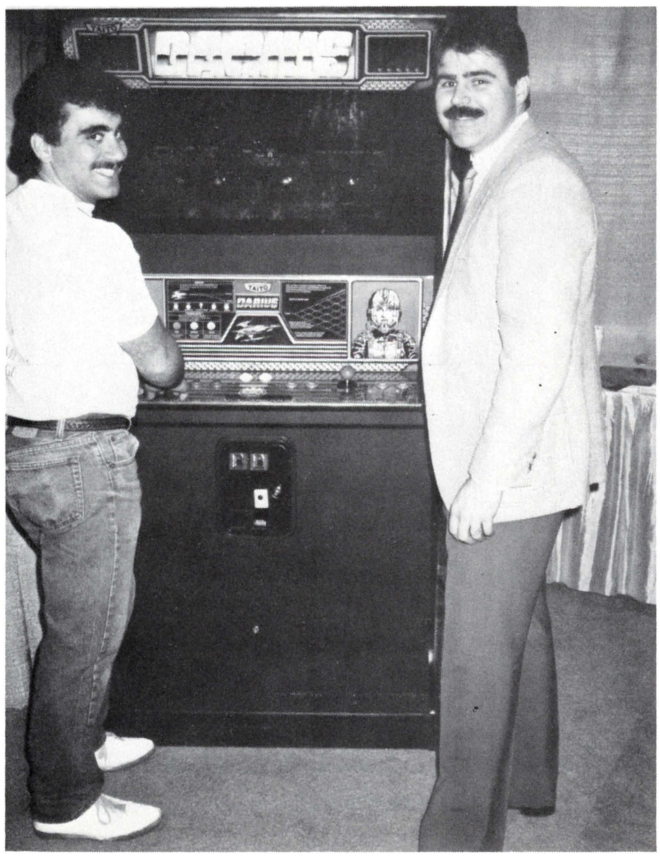


Bill Cravens, right, explains Capcom's *Avenger* to operators.

Mike Drew, right, and Gary Rudolph of Malibu Grand Prix view the latest equipment.

Dave Patterson, left, with Bally's Jolly Backer.

Konami's Frank Pellegrini, left, with Vernon Bolden of Cain Vending.



Taito's Rick Rochetti, right, explains *Darius* to Philip George of Challenger Products.

NSM's Russ Strahan with Terry Flickinger of Automatic Vending.

"UNCLE LARRY" RETURNS TO FUSSBALL PROMOTION

His name is familiar to fussball players in the south. For four years (1974-1978) he operated Uncle Larry's Gameroom in the New Orleans suburb of Metairie, teaching hundreds, perhaps thousands, of youngsters how to play the game. After a long hiatus away from the business, Larry Lott has returned, organizing and promoting the sport of fussball and succeeding in establishing a growing tournament network.

Last year alone, Lott held 301 tournaments with a team participation level of 2,032; individual participation of 3,964; and an average of 6.8 teams per tournament. His return is due to requests. "People who knew I had been involved with fussball were asking me to supply tables," said Lott. "I noticed there was a demand out there. I have 500 players at present and approximately 400 of them are directly from my former gameroom."

Lott started fussball tournaments in October 1985 with two tables in one bar location. In February 1986 he implemented a rating system derived from the USTSA that rates players from rookie to grand master. In between are amateur, expert and pro. Shortly after starting the rating system he began mailing out a newsletter with a calendar of the month's tournaments, a list of all players by rank, plus other information of interest.

Larry Lott, seated, reviews newsletter with staff, standing left to right: Dianna Johnson, Henry Lott and Pauline De la font.

"I had 69 players when I first started the rating system," recalled Lott, "and the number has grown to 500 in one year. Rookies and amateurs are the best draw--they represent the majority of my players. When I had my gameroom before, I obtained the addresses and phone numbers of my players to call them for tournaments, and did occasional mailouts, but not on the regular basis I do now."

His business is a family business and Lott is assisted by his brother Henry, sister Pauline (who does the ratings), fiance Dianna Johnson, and four tournament directors from the ranks of dedicated players. At first, Lott did all the promotion and tournaments himself. He still works a six-day week and constantly strives to enlarge his operation. At present, he has nine bar locations with two tables each and a waiting list of locations interested in fussball.

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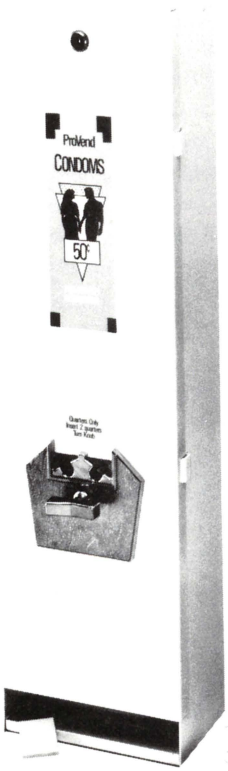

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MORE THAN TABLES

Lott brings in more than just tables. He offers service and people. Five hundred people receive his newsletter and pass it along to others. "There are a lot more fussball players than tournament players," commented Lott. "For every tournament player there must be at least eight to 10 players who don't get into tournaments. The 500 figure is the tip of the iceberg as far as the revenue source.

"I'm in locations that need something. I help them promote their businesses. Bars have a seven-day week--maybe four days that are doing well--but they have slow days and I pick the slowest day to have a tournament. I offer more than machines; I bring in people. Basically, it's rent-a-crowd. Players come in, not necessarily drinking at first because they are playing fussball; but the people that follow the players bring business to the bar. The bar owner gets a crowd when he wouldn't ordinarily have one."

According to Lott, after about two months the bar doesn't need a crowd on that night any more. The night supports itself. Then he moves the tournament to another night that's slow and builds that night. Pretty soon they have a full week. He cites three of his locations, Cheers, Mr. C's and C-Beevers, where there are full weeks and he now has trouble finding a night for the tournament. He reports that many people come into a bar because of the newsletter; people who didn't even know the bar was there in the first place.

All tournament revenues are split 50/50. For an additional charge, Lott provides the tournament director who comes in, cleans and checks the tables, signs up players, organizes, and runs the tournaments. Teams play double elimination and three out of five in the winners bracket; two out of three in the losers bracket. Prizes range from trophies to cash. Trophies are usually awarded in the rookie category and dissuade higher rated players from competing in the lower ranks.

Fussball is the number one table sport in Europe. Originally designed in 1903 in Germany as a strategy table, it was introduced to the American market in the early 60's. Fussball requires skillful hand/eye coordination. Some serious players find that playing in bar locations takes away from their game, which makes gamerooms ideal for the sport. Such liquor-free establishments, as Lott refers to them, are suitable for the whole family. His past experience in gameroom operation will hold him in good stead if he enters that market again.

GAMEROOM OPERATION

Can another Uncle Larry's Gameroom be far behind? "Customers have asked about another gameroom," he replied, and I'm presently looking for a good location." He has a formula for successful gameroom operation and thoughts on how to effectively approach it.

Lott's formula goes something like this--10 fussball tables, three pool tables, 10 pinball machines, 10 videos, darts and a crane. "The basic thing is to offer the most diversity," says Lott. "If something makes just a little bit of money, don't get rid of it just for that reason because it offers diversity. Diversity was the biggest lesson to be learned from the video boom and decline."

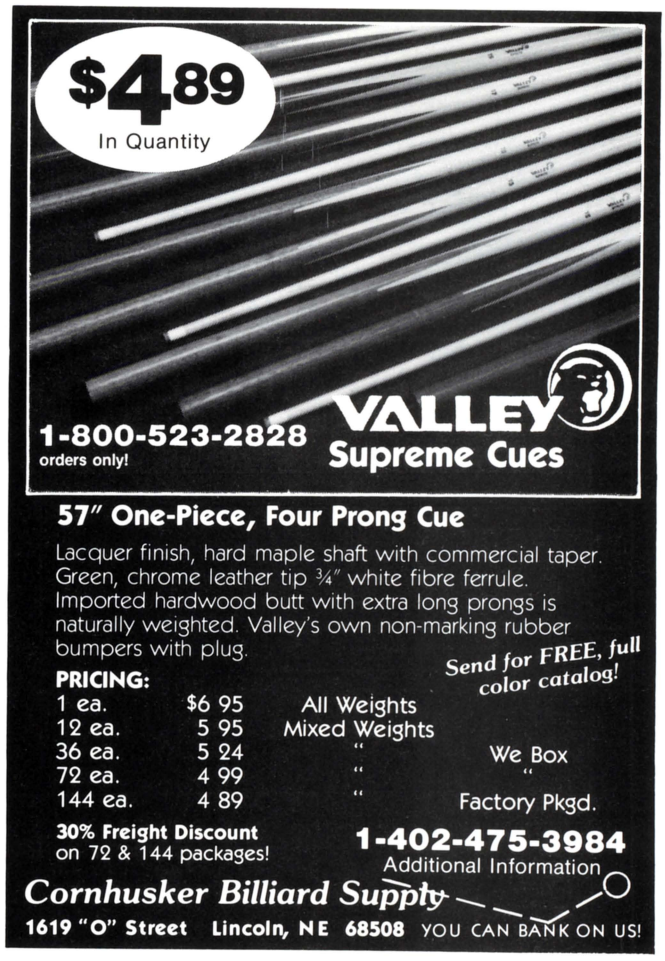
Part of his formula includes promotions for each type of equipment. He used to give away T-shirts for the highest score of the week or a small pizza for highest score of the day.

For those considering opening a gameroom he recommends staying in the range of 2,000 to 3,000 square feet of space because, "when you get above that size you're getting into rental revenues where you might as well buy the building. If you can locate next to a fast food restaurant or other food and beverage business you won't have to supply food. Both the restaurant and gameroom will bring each other customers. If you cannot obtain a location like this, offer a limited menu.

"Another thing about gamerooms," he added, "you can't just put them there and let them operate. You need a responsible person there at all times. I emphasize this because kids come in and ask questions and unless you take the time to answer as correctly as possible, it could come back on you. If you don't know, don't pretend you do. You can't say anything you want or advise them wrongly. I've always dealt with the kids just like an adult and it succeeded. Some gamerooms don't succeed because they have a guard to give change, and when he gets annoyed with the kids he runs them off.

"Kids really don't have a lot of places to go. Remember the Cat Stevens song, 'Where do the children play?' That's exactly my point. At a time in their lives when they have the most energy, are the most curious, the most malleable, there is a shortage of places to go."

Lott mentioned another point in favor of gamerooms--there are a lot of people who don't drink anymore and they need a place to go. "I found that out when I had my gameroom before," Lott said. "I didn't have an age limit, but I had people there from age nine to 40 and they all found something to do." In addition, Louisiana recently passed a law changing the legal drinking age from 18 to 21, adding three more years of youthful customers who would be drawn to gamerooms for entertainment and socializing.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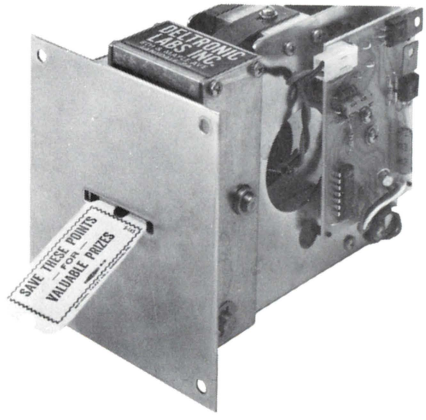

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FUSSBALL LONGEVITY

Lott is sold on the durability of fussball tables and favors the Tornado table for its control mechanism that drops nine balls, its split-bearing design that makes it easy to repair and its balanced men. "A table that gives the least trouble and has the best coin mechanism is the one operators want," he said. "The only thing you replace is parts and they don't cost much. It's a low investment compared to some other coin-op equipment. A new man will cost $3 and you may have to change one a week. A rod runs less than $30 and will last you several months. The bearings on the tables where the rods run, which gum up, must be kept slick with silicone or furniture polish. Tables are usually rotated every five to six years, but can go much longer.

"Fussball is not easy to learn. You're not going to stumble upon it. But you get a kid who has time (and the cost of play is inexpensive considering four can play at once), have an hour set aside on Saturdays to give lessons, and you produce a lot of players as I did before."

Lott is looking to form leagues in the future. It takes 20 locations to make a good league. With his progress in just one year, plus a base of players who've known him a long time and learned the sport under his direction, he's bound to reach his goal.

Anyone wishing to confer with Lott on the subject of fussball operation can write him at P.O. Box 6581, Metairie, LA. 70009, or call either 504-454-3855 or 504-652-5188.

THEN: Back in the 70's, Uncle Larry's Gameroom drew a good fussball crowd. Many of the players have returned to his current tournaments.

NOW: Intense concentration is required when it comes to serious fussball matches like this recent one at a Lott location.

PLAYERS' PICKS

TWO PICK HITS FOR NINTENDO SYSTEMS

BY STEVE HARRIS & THE U.S. NATIONAL VIDEO GAME TEAM

Ever since the introduction of the modern video game system by video game grandmaster and Sente founder Nolan Bushnell, we've seen a number of companies unveil their own convertible hardware, with several manufacturers producing titles exclusively for their system.

One company that has had excellent success with its convertible gaming system is Nintendo. In fact, its VS. System has probably made the biggest impact of any new product released to the coin-op industry since *Pong*. At a time when collections were slumping and high game prices were the norm, the Nintendo unit appeared to be the ideal video game, offering operators quality titles at one-eighth the cost of similar dedicated fare. Considering the fact that most games will make money during their initial releases, and taking into account the superior nature of many of the VS. games, Nintendo enabled many operators to see black again.

Since its appearance, the VS. System has matured from its initial sports titles like *Tennis* and *Baseball* to a diversified selection of themes; offering players anything from cute adventures to the obligatory space shoot 'em-up.

With close to 100,000 VS. units currently in the field, Nintendo has taken a bold step that will ensure the constant flow of new product to the VS. line. Through special arrangements, other leading manufacturers like Sun, Data East, and Tecmo, Nintendo will produce compatible software for Nintendo's VS. System. Not only does this move enable Nintendo to concentrate on hardware development (witness the *Play Choice-10*), but it guarantees that the library of VS. games will grow. And, when you consider that a convertible system is only as good as the games available, the promise of additional software is very encouraging.

This edition of the Player's Picks will take a look at two new games now available for the Nintendo systems. By way of Konami there is *Castlevania*. This spooky offering features goal-oriented play mechanics and a host of secret surprises guaranteed to delight all types of players. The other promising new title is *Metroid*, an adventure game set in an elaborate world inhabited by some of the strangest creatures ever seen. Both of these titles are excellent additions to the VS. System and definitely worth a look.

VS. Castlevania

Voted the "Best System Conversion" at the recent ACME convention in New Orleans, the simple, yet addictive game play of *VS. Castlevania* makes it one of the best games ever released for the Nintendo unit.

The basic premise of *Castlevania* pits the player, in the guise of a heroic adventurer armed with a whip, against a host of ghosts, goblins, zombies, and other creatures of the dark. Gathering different types of heart along the way, the player must reach gates guarded by evil villains and vanquish them with multiple hits from the whip before progressing on to more difficult scenes.

Despite the straightforward theme, *Castlevania* spices up the action by including a number of items that increase the player's power, much like the Nintendo mega-hit of last year, *Super Mario Bros.* Also similar to *Super Mario, Castlevania* increases incentives by placing secret bonus objects throughout each playfield. Players can obtain the items only if certain actions are accomplished at specific points during play. These are excellent additions that are applauded by frequent players (who enjoy the little Easter egg hunts) and don't detract from the game otherwise.

The graphic resolution of *Castlevania* is sparse, but fits the theme of the game very well. Background soundtracks help create a haunted house mood, which lends some depth to the actual game play. It's very adequate, and the music and sound effects do generate atmosphere.

Castlevania is a top-notch game. It provides an endless supply of playing variations, including multiple paths which offer different dangers and point scoring incentives. *Castlevania* offers constant interaction, and above all it's fun to play. The storyline, although somewhat similar to *Super Mario Bros.*, is original and much more challenging than *Super Mario*, decreasing game time while increasing the action. *Castlevania* is a thumbs-up winner that's a definite plus to all owners of the VS. System.

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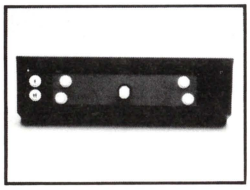
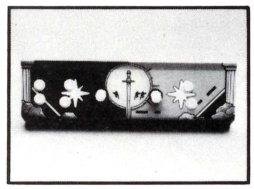
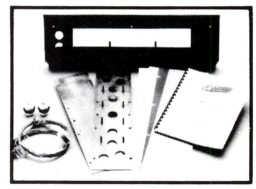
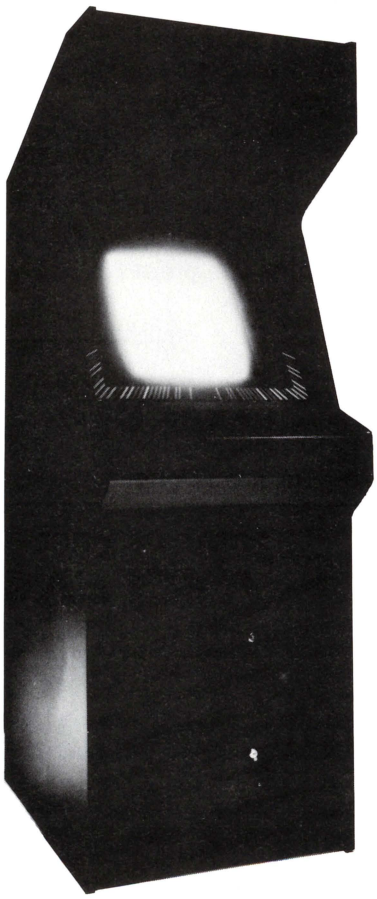
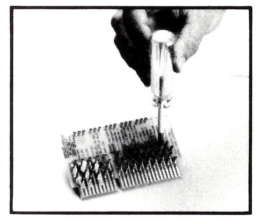

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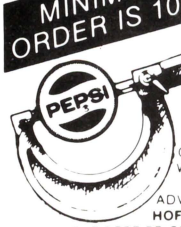

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Metroid

Take a character that resembles an odd-shaped humanoid and dress him up in some colorful duds. Now, give him the ability to run and jump, so that he can avoid numerous obstacles like alien creatures and canyons filled with molten lead. Next, provide our friend with a gun, enabling him to dispatch the nasties that are in constant pursuit while collecting the energy they occasionally leave behind to sustain himself. Also, hide various objects around the environment that will increase his firepower, let him roll up into a ball to sneak under impasses, and accomplish other amazing feats. Been done before, you say? Maybe, but never with as much flair or with the attention to detail that's evident in *Metroid*, the latest card release for Nintendo's something-for-everyone gaming system, the *Play Choice-10*.

Metroid consists of a number of search and destroy missions, taking players across an ever-changing landscape that is riddled with tunnels, canyons, crawlways, etc. Throughout the course of each round players encounter a wide variety of obstacles ranging from alien creatures to walls that require specific weapons to destroy. Each enemy has a unique personality that make him an easy (or tricky) target.

The real attraction of *Metroid*, however, is derived from the sheer size of the environment in which the player interacts, as well as the almost limitless number of paths that can be taken to achieve a common goal. The screen scrolls both vertically and horizontally to accommodate the action, taking *Metroid* through countless encounters and across all types of terrain.

Game play is based on energy consumption, with power losses occurring whenever the player comes in contact with an alien or when *Metroid* falls into lava. Energy can be regained occasionally when an alien is eliminated. Sometimes the alien will leave a glowing pellet in its wake, which can then be collected.

The animation of most of the characters and the backgrounds are adequate, but the graphics of the *Metroid* character are

detailed and humorous. *Metroid* moves with a lumbering style and somersaults head over heels in mid-air whenever the player jumps or when *Metroid* rolls up into a ball to get under low ceilings.

Metroid is a great game that is perfectly suited for the *Play Choice-10* system. The size of the playfields allow for some exciting journeys, and the ever-changing surroundings guarantee a new challenge with every step. Definitely a superior game that will have players forming lines and giving the *Play Choice-10* system a first class workout!

Correction ...

In last issue's Player Picks I mistakenly wrote that Romstar had been licensed the rights to their latest super-hit kit, *Sky Sharks*, from Capcom. Although I know Capcom would like to take the credit for this gem of a game, the truth is that *Sky Sharks* came from a Romstar/Taito collaboration. I regret the error.

APA INTERNATIONAL SCOREBOARD

Arkanoid **1,295,420**
Joe Feldt
LA Airport Hilton
Los Angeles, CA

Hang-On **33,923,450**
Richard Powell
Hermosa Arcade
Hermosa Beach, CA

Out Run **52,897,690**
Richard Jackson
Le Fun
Austin, TX

Bubble Bobble **3,271,490**
Clint Schuster
Galaxy Arcade
Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Ikari Warriors **1,414,500**
Walt Price
Galaxy Arcade
Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Super Mario Bros. **3,055,800**
Stephen Sparks
Le Fun
Austin, TX

Danger Zone **4,525,800**
Donn Nauert
Le Fun
Austin, TX

Mat Mania **5,000,150**
RAC Carpana
Fascination
New York, NY

Pin-Bot **15,245,720**
Jelly Cartegena
Broadway Arcade
New York, NY

For official forms to submit high scores to the Amusement Players Association, send a SASE to: APA, P.O. Box 1558, Torrance, CA 90505.

COMING UP:

The July Buyer's Guide featuring

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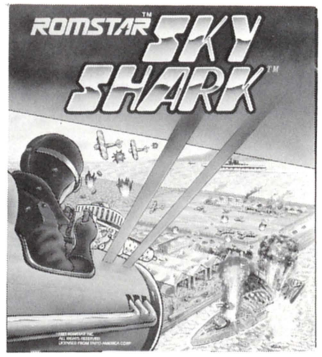
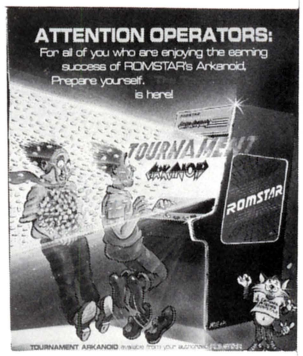
Sky Shark, Tournament Arkanoid




ATTENTION OPERATORS:
For all of you who are enjoying the earning success of ROMSTAR's Arkanoid,
Prepare yourself,
is here!
ROMSTAR

Romstar offers a new one-player conversion kit in *Sky Shark* and a sequel to its successful *Arkanoid* kit with *Tournament Arkanoid*. Both are designed for all vertical uprights and cocktail universal video games.

Sky Shark takes the player on a mission over jungle terrain and seaports to destroy attacking air, sea and land positions by firing missiles and releasing bombs.

Tournament Arkanoid invites one to five players to take turns using spaceships to break through walls. When players capture onscreen balloons they gain more control over their spaceships. This game is more difficult than the original *Arkanoid* and demands faster reflexes and a higher level of coordination. Thirty-three new screens have been added.

The game is available as a retrofit kit for original *Arkanoid* kit games and comes with three ROMs and new marquee. The basic kit comes with PC board, marquee, plexi, joystick, buttons, overlays and schematic.

For more details, contact your local distributor or write Romstar, 3043 Kashiwa St., Torrance, CA 90505, or call (213) 539-2744.

F-14 Tomcat

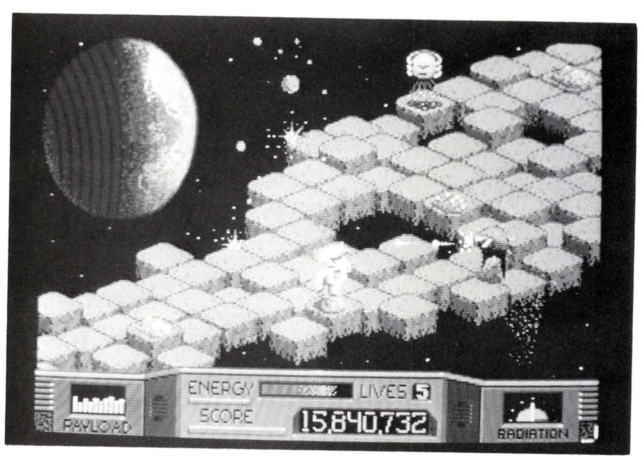
Williams Electronics introduces another pinball creation by Steve Ritchie with it's latest and fastest game to date, *F-14 Tomcat*.

In *F-14 Tomcat* the electronic adversary, General Yagov, fights back with a super-fast pinball shot, "the line of death", breaking the sound and light barrier. Original music and flash lamp effects increase game action. Even the score displays on the backbox are animated for action.

Striking General Yagov on the "line of death" or hitting center targets when lit builds "kills". There's four-ball multi-ball, a ball launcher that fires the ball straight up; autolock, an automatic gating device; and a game-smart ball diverter that sends the ball where a shot is needed.

Other features include ball kickback and flight insurance that gives even the inexperienced player an extra ball when the third ball drains if the score and ball time do not meet adjusted criteria.

For more details, contact your Williams distributor or write directly to Williams Electronics Games, Inc. 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, Il 60618, (312) 267-2240.



Moonquake, Super System

Bally Sente announces its highly advanced *Super System* using Amiga printed circuit boards, and the release of *Moonquake*, the first video for the system.

In *Moonquake*, a one or two-player game, players "beam down" onto an interplanetary belt and undertake a mission to gather mineral deposits. They must resist meteor storms, lunar quakes and hurdle blockades until they confront a well-guarded, fierce and furry lunar beast.

An ever-crumbling terrain faces the players and they risk falling into the abyss of deep space. Certain meteors attach to the interplanetary belt's surface and build up as mineral deposits to add life and energy to players, who "beam back" the payload to their home planet.

The game's control panel features a joystick for motion control, a thrust button for distance in moves and jumps and four fire

buttons for firing rockets in all directions from portholes in the legs of players' spacesuits.

The development team for *Moonquake* included Bob Smith, Dennis Koble and Jesse Osborne.

Among the Amiga features in the *Super System* are: multiple screen splitting, increased vertical resolution for high photographic quality, over 4,000 colors, 16 channels of digitized sound and 16 million bytes of memory space.

Bally offers the new mainframe or an electronic retrofit kit to convert former Sente games and SAC MAN conversions to the *Super System*. Software is sold separately. The cabinet's hinged control panel allows for easier conversions; the cartridge board eliminates handling of loose chips.

For more information, contact your Bally distributor or write to Bally Sente, 1289 Anvilwood Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94089, or call (408) 744-1414.

Face to Face System, Victory at Sea

SMS Manufacturing has developed a two-player video competition system, *Face to Face*, that features four games of strategy.

One of the games, *Victory at Sea*, features realistic battle sounds and challenges players to plot strategy and sink the opponent's fleet first before they are sunk. It is available in dedicated form and as a kit for the Nintendo VS. System.

The other three offerings for *Face to Face* are three cards games: *Draw Poker*, *Five Card Stud* and *Texas Hold'Em!*.

SMS plans to introduce more games for this system in the future. All four games are available now and are totally interchangeable to facilitate rotation of games.

For more information, contact your local distributor or write SMS Manufacturing Corp., 1000 Airport Road, Lakewood, NJ 08701, or call 1-800/221-0138; in New Jersey call (201) 370-3030.

Big Top, Crane Conversion Kit

Dynasoft introduces the *Big Top* USA-made single upright crane available with joystick or button control and two coin mechanisms. The company also offers a conversion kit with cradle and claw mechanisms to retrofit most standard crane cabinets.

The *Big Top* plays three musical tunes and talks to players. It offers four different game play settings that allow the operator to switch back and forth by just changing the software setting.

Special features include an extra deep plush prize area, winner light, prize meter, sound system and LED problem detector. The unit has tempered plate glass in front with lexan on the sides.

The design is solid state with no mechanical relays to break down. Circuits are microprocessor-driven and programmed with intelligent diagnostics. Time of play, sound, claw strength and speed are fully adjustable.

The unit has an accurate coin counter and plush counter, and a joystick height accessible to small children.

The conversion kit includes PC board, sound board, harnesses and joystick, digital display board for time and credits and all cradle and claw mechanisms. Optional equipment of ticket and gumball dispenser, dollar bill acceptor, transformer and switching power supply are available with the kit and with the *Big Top* crane.

For more information, write Dynasoft, 3218 McConnell St., Joplin, MO 64001, or call (417) 781-2212.

Galaxy 200

NSM/Loewen-America introduces the *Galaxy 200*, a 200 selection phonograph with coin mechanism for four different coin values.

Galaxy 200 features a stereo amplifier with 2x200 watt music power, microphone and tape recorder connection, mono/stereo switch, and LED-indicated voltage.

Three displays show the top ten, selected title, record playing and credits after coin insertion. The playing mechanism is computer-guided. There are eight loudspeakers in a stereo combination and lit-up sound chambers; two bass loudspeakers; four medium/high-frequency speakers and two high-frequency speakers.

Optional accessories include service memory and recording device, NSM printer, output transformer for eternal loudspeakers, microphone and remote control/wall boxes.

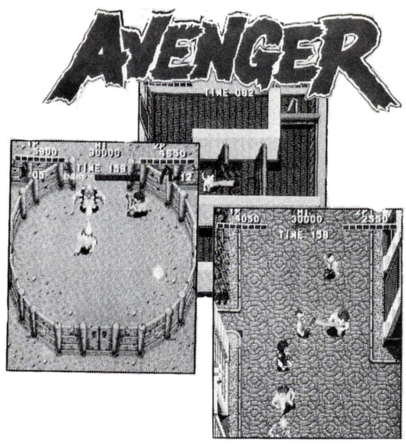
Random play records and background music can be programmed. Random plays are selected from among the top ten after a pre-set time interval.

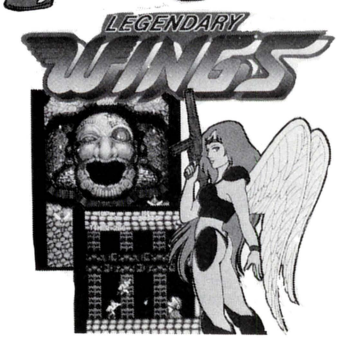
For more details contact your local distributor or write directly to NSM/Loewen-America, Inc., 5207 N. Rose St., Chicago, IL 60656, or call (312) 992-2280.

Deluxe Trivia-the Fifth Edition

Merit Industries, 1986 AMOA award winner for trivia games, has introduced *Deluxe Trivia Whiz*, a one to four-player game available in all cabinet styles.

Deluxe Trivia Whiz lists trivia questions by decade. Players can choose from the 50's, 60's, 70's or 80's and sex trivia. There are hundreds of new questions in each category.





The game can be a dedicated or countertop unit and quick kit to update existing trivia games or change *Defender* or other games into new and challenging trivia games. Merit's trivia line includes *Trivia Whiz I, II, III, IV* and the *Tic Tac Trivia* series.

For more details, write Merit Industries, P.O. Box 50004, Bensalem, PA 19020, or call 1-800/523-2760; also (215) 639-4700.)

Avenger, Bionic Commandos, Legendary Wings

Capcom USA introduces a trio of video kits with seek-and-destroy themes in *Avenger*, *Bionic Commandos* and *Legendary Wings*.

In *Avenger*, heroes Ryu and Ko must restore peace and honor to their hometown, Paradise City, after it's taken over by the despised Geshita and his men. Players must use punch and kick techniques and pick up weapons hidden behind palace doors to rescue hostages. The game has an eight-way joystick, punch and kick buttons and the ability to combine both for a roundhouse kick.

Saving the world from an evil spirit is the theme of *Bionic Commandos*, in which an army sends a special commando unit to infiltrate the enemy's army and destroy its missiles. Special weapons include bionic arms and shotguns.

Legendary Wings challenges players to dodge enemy attacks, collect hidden POW's and avoid being swallowed by a giant man-like statue as they fight for the survival and future of the human race. Controls include an eight-way joystick and buttons for air and ground attack.

For more details, contact your distributor or write to Capcom USA, Inc., 1283-C Mountain View/Alviso

Road, Sunnyvale, CA 94089, or call (408) 745-7081.

Tekbilt Remote Control System

Tekbilt, Inc. has developed the AT5100-TV remote control system that allows operators to offer video card games on a 19-inch color TV.

The system includes the television set that functions normally. After plug-in installation (requiring only one wire), the AT5100-TV system will use M. Kramer, SMS or other Model II or 3000 logic boards to transform the TV into a video card game.

The player's transmitter is hand-held and wireless and duplicates the function of a full size button panel. It includes regular functions such as credit, deal, stand, draw and cancel. The supervisor transmitter, operated by the person in charge of the location, is also hand-held and wireless. It switches the TV to a poker game, handles credit functions and switches back to normal TV reception.

Distributor inquiries are welcome. For more information, write Tekbilt, Inc., Oreland Industrial Park, P.O. Box 85, Oreland, PA 19075, or call (215) 884-4443.

Super Duper Casino

U.S. Games has begun shipping its *Super Duper Casino*, a multiple game conversion board for countertop videos.

Super Duper Casino offers operators five new games in a single replacement board: *Poker*, *U.S. Black Jack*, *U.S. Craps*, *Wizard of Words*- and *Sex Trivia*. Operators or locations can add customized greetings or sales messages on the introductory screens.

All five games are new and feature player enhancements. For example, *Poker* and *U.S. Black Jack* include jokers in the card play for more excitement; *U.S. Craps* figures odds and rewards a higher score for "making a point" that is more difficult to achieve; *Wizard of Words* challenges players with 1,000 words and phrases in eight categories; and *Sex Trivia* includes over 1,000 different questions. Players enter their names before starting and the unit addresses them by name during the game.

Super Duper Casino has been designed to allow for additional chips for future games in the series. Several ROM chip conversions and question upgrades in lots of 1,000 for *Wizard of Words* and *Sex Trivia* are planned for release later this year. The games can be played by one to four players.

In addition, each board contains an extensive security system that protects against copying and unauthorized changes to game programming. And it converts *Little Casino I* and *II* plus all other countertop games.

For more information, write U.S. Games, 2421 Caladium Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345, or call (404) 441-2910.

Out Run Mini

Sega Enterprises now offers its popular *Out Run* high-action, road-racing adventure game in a new mini model.

Out Run mini has outer dimensions of 32.7 inches deep by 21.7 inches wide by 65 inches high. Designed for locations where space is at a premium, this model affords a chance to capture the interest and play generated by the original game. The monitor measures a full 20 inches as in the standard and upright models. All game play, sharp graphics, and clear sound system remain the same.

For more information, contact your Sega distributor or write Sega Enterprises, Ltd., 2149 Paragon

Drive, San Jose, CA 95131, or call (408) 435-0201.

Rainbow Machine

Exidy introduces the *Rainbow Machine*, a two product vending unit that can dispense a variety of items from condoms to survival kits.

Dimensions of the unit's sturdy cabinet are 24 inches high by 12 inches wide and 10 inches deep. It can be wall or counter-mounted and is strictly mechanical; there are no electrical connections required. A special alarm system discourages tampering.

The *Rainbow Machine* has two viewing windows for product display, an adjustable coin mechanism that can be set from 10 cents to $2 and a capacity of 150 packages measuring up to 2 and 7/8 inches by 2 and 7/8 inches by 1/4 inch (3/8 inch optional).

For more details, write Exidy, Inc., 5122 Calle Del Sol, Santa Clara, CA 95054, or call (408) 496-6466.

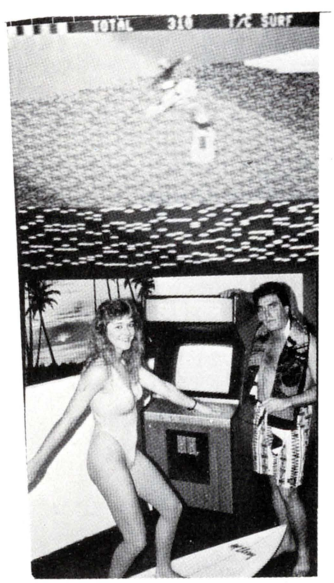
Surfer

Action Surf Video challenges players to "ride the wild surf" and even "hang 10" with its waterless surf simulator video, *Surfer*, that comes complete with surf board.

Surfer is a one or two-player game that brings the excitement of surfing indoors. Each play includes five waves of increasing difficulty. Players launch down 12-foot Waimea waves, being careful not to collide with other surfers, hit the bottom of the wave or the reef, or wipe out. Extra points are awarded for difficult maneuvers such as "riding the tube" and "hanging 10".

The surfboard that comes with the game gives a realistic feel and features a sophisticated sensor. The game will be available in dedicated form and as a kit.

Surfer appeals to all age levels of men, women and children. For more information, write Action Surf Video, 511 First St., Suite 215, Encinitas, CA 92024, or call (619) 943-0975.



2001 Bio-Weigher

Ascot International has developed a streamlined, computerized scale, *2001 Bio-Weigher*, that gives the user information on actual weight and ideal weight.

The *2001 Bio-Weigher* fits in a three-square- foot area, can be rolled on its wheeled frame and relocated without requiring re-calibration or affecting its memory or performance.

It's most unusual feature is the printed ticket that contains: programmable message, actual weight, date, vital statistics, ideal weight range, weight status and bio-rhythm based on the customer's birth date. Data is derived from information entered by the user, such as height, build and birth date. The printed ticket is a permanent record that customers can use for future reference.

The *2001 Bio-Weigher* contains a voice chip with volume control that can be programmed to carry any message. It also has a high-resolution illuminated liquid crystal display that can be programmed in the same manner as the weight ticket. The unit is equipped with several anti-theft devices.

A clear plastic sign frame, or backing card, will hold any sign up to nine inches by 12 inches, allowing easy advertisement for the location.

For further information, write Ascot International, Inc., 2850 Delk Road, 19-L, Marietta, GA 30067, or call (404) 955-0263).

Condom Machine

ProVend Products introduces a compact condom-dispensing vending machine constructed of heavy gauge steel. The unit is available as single or double selection.

Features include a coin mechanism that can be adjusted to vend at 50 cents, 75 cents or $1; a cash box capacity of 600 quarters; and ability to hold over 150 condoms.

A wall-mounted unit, it comes with two, non-obtrusive security bars in addition to a closure lock. Dimensions are 31 inches high by eight inches wide by 5.75 inches deep. Quality condoms, sealed and

packaged to fit the vendor, are available from ProVend.

For more details, write ProVend Products, 4020 Payne Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44103, or call (216) 432-0765.

American Speedway

Progressive Game Distributors (PGD) introduces *American Speedway*, a one or two-player driving video with buy-in feature for extra earnings.

American Speedway challenges the player to beat all the computer-controlled cars to qualify for the next race, or insert a coin to continue racing. The second player can join in at any time for the next race. Increasing difficulty and different race courses make each race a new challenge.

The game is available in dedicated form or as a kit for the Dynamo System Cabinet; also as a retrofit kit for *Karate Champ*, *Kung Fu Master*, *Commando*, *Ikari Warriors* or *Victory Road*.

For more details, write PGD, 1985 Friendship Drive, Suite J, El Cajon, CA 92020, or call (619) 449-9010.

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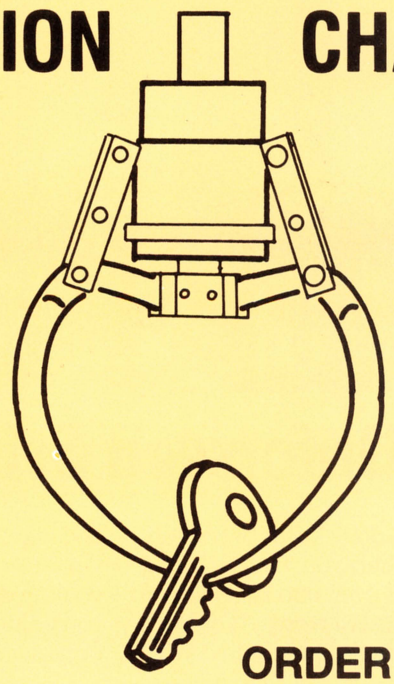

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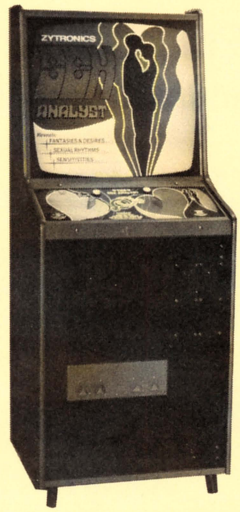

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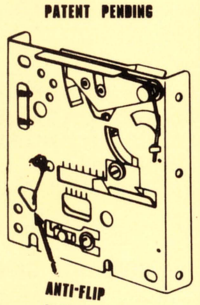

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CALENDAR

MAY

1 2 3

Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Second Annual National Team Dart Tournament, Chicago. Contact John Fetters, AMOA Dart Association, 111 E. Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 644-6610.

10 11 12 13 14

Roller Skating Rink Operators Association 50th anniversary convention and trade show, Caesars Palace, Las Vegas. Contact RSROA headquarters, P.O. Box 81846, Lincoln, NE 68501, (402)489-8811.

11 12 13

AMOA 1987 Government Affairs Conference, Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington D.C. Contact AMOA, 111 E. Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 644-6610.

JUNE

4 5 6

Ohio Coin Machine Association Convention. Holiday Inn/Cleveland-Independence, Ohio. Contact OCMA (614)221-8600.

12 13 14

Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association annual meeting and trade show, Holiday Inn, Decatur, IL. Contact ICMOA, 710 East Ogden Ave., Suite 113, Naperville, IL, 60540, (312)369-2406.

19 20

Mississippi Coin Operators Association convention and trade show, Ramada Inn Coliseum, Jackson, MS. Call (601)371-1000.

20 21

Pacific Northwest Exposition of Games and Music and WAMOA state dart tournament, Red Lion Inn, Bellevue, WA. Contact Jim or Karen Hart (509)457-5891.

23 24 25

Pay Phone Annual Conference & Exhibition (PACE), Atlanta Waverly Hotel. For information call (800)227-1234 or in Ill. (312)986-1432.

24 25 26

Bowling Proprietors' Association of America Convention. Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu, HI. Contact Vladimir Wapensky (817)649-5105. (AAMA will be exhibiting. Contact David Weaver (703)548-8044.

AUGUST

7 8 9

Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association Convention, Seven Springs Resort (between exits 9 & 10 of the Pennsylvania Turnpike), Champion, PA. Contact PAMMA (717)232-5322, or in PA (800)521-7778.

SEPTEMBER

25 26

The Michigan Coin Machine Operators Association Convention. Clarion Hotel, Lansing, MI. Contact Walt Maner, (517)372-2323.

OCTOBER

24 24

Amusement & Music Operators of Virginia convention and trade show, Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, VA. Call (804)262-9283.

NOVEMBER

3 4 5

Nightclub and Bar Expo National Conference, Atlantic City, NJ. Contact Nightclub & Bar Magazine (601)236-5510.

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APRIL

6 7 8 9

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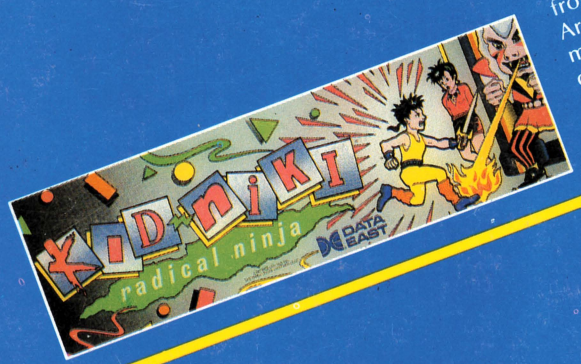
Gold Wings p/b	$170.00	$200.00
Top Gunner	$110.00	$130.00

KARNOV, the fire-breathing Russian, is seeking the lost Treasure of Babylon. He runs, swims, jumps, climbs and flies through 9 levels of video game play. Enemies of various sizes and strengths are out to prevent KARNOV from finding the treasure.

KARNOV's unique character, intense action and strategy will keep collections high in all types of locations. KARNOV is available as an affordable upright in the all-new Data East cabinet.

KID NIKI is truly AWESOME! This "rad" and "bad" punk dude is out to rescue his spike-haired girlfriend, Princess Margo, from the clutches of the Stone Wizard. Armed with a razor-sharp sword, this miniature madman slices his giant rivals down to size!
KID NIKI is offered as a **Horizontal** Generic Kit and is a quick'n'easy plug-in for Kung-Fu Master.



DATA EAST

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